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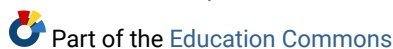
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2017

## Mentoring beginning teachers in Catholic schools in Western Australia: An exploratory study

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***MENTORING BEGINNING TEACHERS IN CATHOLIC SCHOOLS IN  
WESTERN AUSTRALIA: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY***

**Submitted by**

**John Topliss BA BEd GradDipRE MEd**

**A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT  
OF THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE DEGREE OF  
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY**

**SCHOOL OF EDUCATION**

**The University of Notre Dame Australia**

**2 Mouat St (P.O. Box 1225)**

**Fremantle Western Australia**

**August, 2017**

## **Statement of Sources**

This thesis does not contain any published or unpublished material for which I was awarded any other degree or diploma. The sources of information from all other authors were duly recognised in the body of the thesis. This thesis was not submitted for examination in any other tertiary institution. This research followed all the rules and guidelines as directed by the University Ethics Committee.

Signed: *J.W.Topliss* Date: 5/08/2017

## **ABSTRACT**

The study identified and explored the mentoring experiences in the transition from graduate to Early Career Teacher (ECT) in selected Catholic primary and secondary schools in Western Australia. The research addressed a significant deficit, as presently the lack of a system-wide framework for the mentoring of ECTs, the cessation of the current ECT program and the limited training of mentors, has resulted in less than ideal mentoring experiences for ECTs. The study examined the perceptions of ECTs in the transition from graduate to Beginning Teacher and involved three distinct yet inter-related phases that explored the mentoring experience. The first phase sought the expectations of mentoring of a small group of final year, Primary Education students from a Catholic University in Western Australia. The second phase, the Beginning Teachers' phase, was conducted with a group over their first three terms of teaching and examined their experiences of mentoring. In the final phase, the perceptions of Catholic primary principals were sought regarding the place and logistics of mentoring. These phases were then synthesised to provide a clearer picture of mentoring in the Catholic Education system.

The data collection methods involved both a survey questionnaire and focus group input. Descriptive statistical analysis was undertaken for each phase of the study for interpreting survey data from Post-Internship (Pre-Service) teachers, Beginning Teachers and principals. Such an approach helped to determine the numerical occurrence of concept/theme descriptors in relation to answering each of the research questions. For the purpose of addressing the research questions, focus group qualitative data were garnered via the use of both open-ended and closed questioning techniques, which were then audio-recorded and transcribed for analysis. Data was interpreted using a Mixed Methods convergence design.

A chief finding was that the guarantee of a mentor does not necessarily alleviate every problem faced by an ECT. However, the attributes of a mentor may significantly assist or

hinder the aspirations of an ECT. It was also found that the regular feedback provided to Post-Internship (Pre-Service) teachers became more informal as an ECTs' careers progressed. The importance of feedback to the vocation of both Post-Internship (Pre-Service) teachers and ECTs indicated that further investigation was specifically required in the Religious Education Learning Area. Significantly, nearly half of ECTs received minimal feedback from mentors and or/principals regarding the prospect of ongoing permanency. Although some of the ECTs received feedback in the Proficient Stage of the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) Standards as a Key Performance Indicator for their ongoing employment, 54% of Beginning Teachers reported no such feedback. The lack of certainty about their future role in the work-place impacted the relationship some ECTs had with their mentor and/or principal. Encouragingly, the majority of principals recognised the importance of mentoring by offering support for the instigation of a system-wide mentoring framework.

On the basis of these findings, principles upon which a new mentoring framework might be developed are proposed. These principles might benefit principals, mentors and ECTs, through the introduction of strategies such as school and system-based mentoring coordinators.

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The completion of this thesis would not have been possible without the faith, love, hope and invaluable support of many people. I wish to acknowledge:

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## LIST OF ACRONYMS

ACER	Australian Council of Educational Research
AFL	Australian Football League
AITSL	The Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership
ACE	The Alliance for Catholic Education
ATP	Assistant Teacher Program ( equivalent to internship)
CPPA	Catholic Primary Principals Association
CEOWA	The Catholic Education Office of Western Australia
CEO	Catholic Education Office
CUWA	Catholic University Western Australia
DEWA	Department of Education Western Australia
DOTT	Duties Other Than Teaching
EBA	Enterprise Bargaining Agreement
ECE	Early Childhood Educator
ECT	Early Career Teacher
ECTs	Early Career Teachers
HECS	Higher Education Contribution Scheme
HOPP	Head of Professional Practice
MASH	Mentoring and Specialised Help Unit
MET	Mentoring for Effective Teaching
MM	Mixed Methods
NCEC	National Catholic Education Commission
NCTAF	National Commission on Teaching and America's Future
NSIT	National School Improvement Tool
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PMM	Parallel Mixed Methods
PD	Professional Development
PISA	Program for International Student Assessment
PLC	Professional Learning Community
PLM	Professional Learning Meeting
QUAL/Qual	Qualitative
QUAN/Quan	Quantitative
QCS	Quality Catholic Schools
SCSEEC	Standing Council on School Education and Early Childhood
TALIS	Teaching and Learning International Survey
TIMMS	Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study
TRBWA	Teacher Registration Board of Western Australia
UK	United Kingdom
UNDA	The University of Notre Dame Australia
USA	United States of America
WACOT	The Western Australian College of Teaching (superseded by TRBWA)

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### Overview

The primary purpose of this study is to identify and explore the mentoring experiences in the transition from graduate to Beginning Teacher in Catholic primary schools in Perth, Western Australia. This is the field of education that reflects my vocation and own experience as a primary teacher in Catholic schools for 27 years, an administrator for 21 years and as a practice supervisor of The University of Notre Dame (UNDA) students for 22 years. The author has found in daily dealings that Pre-Service Teachers and Early Career Teachers may find the responsibility of teaching a class solo, intimidating. When one considers, the social interaction between student, family and other class members coupled together with Curriculum demands, reporting and maintaining discipline, some ECTs may perceive a demanding task on their first teaching appointment. At times the author has also found when mentoring these ECTs they can feel overwhelmed. It is hoped the development of a new mentoring framework will assist both leaders and mentors in settling into daily professional life. It should be acknowledged that the life of Catholic Saint, scholar and mentor, Charles Borromeo (1538-1584), who demonstrated the values of knowledge, humility, eagerness, teaching and prayer (Atwood, 2012; Guissano, 2015) has had significant impact on the author of the study in proposing a name for a new Mentoring Framework for Catholic Schools identified in the final Chapter.

Specifically, this study will examine the mentoring experiences in Catholic schools of final year, Primary Education students from the Catholic University of Western Australia (CUWA) during the completion of their final “Internship”. This study will also explore the initial six month mentoring experiences and aspirations of beginning primary and secondary teachers embarking on their careers in Catholic schools in Western Australia. It will also



investigate the perceptions of current Catholic primary principals on the perceived benefits of implementing a mentoring framework.

For the purpose of maintaining conceptual clarity the nomenclature CUWA, Pre-Service teacher, Intern, Post-Internship teachers refers to those participants who are close to completing their university teacher education course. The terms Early Career Teacher (ECT), Beginning Teacher, novice and mentee are used to refer to those who are in their first year of teaching.

### **The Origins of Mentoring in Contemporary Education**

Mentoring can trace its modern origins in education back to the 1800's, when at the height of the Industrial Revolution in England, apprenticed teachers were trained on the job to follow the teaching methods of a more senior and experienced teacher (Boreen, Johnson, Niday & Potts, 2009). This apprenticeship is what would eventually be known as mentoring. Mentoring is a relationship between a more experienced employee, commonly referred to as the mentor, and an inexperienced new employee, called the mentee or protégé. The role of the mentor has been described as one involving counseling, coaching, educating, inspiring, enriching, leading and advising the less experienced person (Boreen, Johnson, Niday & Potts, 2009; Fulton, 1990; Furlong & Maynard, 1995; Nakamura, Shernoff & Hooker, 2009).

Passmore, Peterson and Freire (2012) stated, "We would share the view that Coaching and Mentoring share many qualities" (p. 6). Australia's official teaching oversight body, The Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) agrees, defining mentoring as having a direct relationship with coaching, "The term 'coaching' is used in a wide variety of contexts to describe an array of relationships. Consequently, there is no universal practice when it comes to coaching. Coaching relationships can and often do cross over with mentoring, teaching by instruction and counseling" (AITSL, 2013, p. 4). For the purposes of

this study, the definition of mentoring and coaching encompasses the AITSL definition and the one provided by Passmore, Peterson and Freire (2012).

Present-day teacher education involves attending university programs where an internship or mentor model is adopted which links classroom practice with latest educational theory (Boreen, Johnson, Niday & Potts, 2009). Furlong and Maynard (1995, as cited in Boreen et al., 2009) suggested a positive change in the way mentoring of Beginning Teachers is conceptualised. They stated, "... a Beginning Teacher is encouraged to be an active participant, inquirer and critical thinker. The mentor's role has also changed from advice-giver and problem-solver to questioner, listener and model for reflective thinker" (p. 9). Similarly, Bouffard (2013) noted a conceptual change in current mentoring practices from one where induction involved a simple orientation process for Beginning Teachers to one where mentors are trained to assist Beginning Teachers to be more effective from the outset. She stated:

The ultimate goal is to make new teachers more effective with students more quickly. And that goal say experts, requires an approach that is more targeted to instruction than past efforts, using rigorously selected, trained mentors who observe new teachers in their classrooms, provide instructional guidance and model effective practice (p. 1).

Currently there is clear indication in the literature (Boreen, Johnson, Niday & Potts, 2009; Bouffard 2013; Ingersoll & Smith, 2003; Riley, 2010) of the conceptual change that has occurred in the mentoring of Beginning Teachers. Such an observation was elaborated in the Finnish research of Heikkinen, Jokinen and Tynjala (2012) who observed how mentoring had undergone several changes from the apprentice-trainer model to one which is presently seen as "...being associated with collaboration, collegiality, and interaction" (p. 13). Their definition of mentoring was expanded to include lifelong learning where,

The applications of mentoring do not only support new teachers' induction periods but also the professional dialogue between teachers of different ages,

in which both the novices and the experienced teachers learn something new (p. 14).

Teaching can therefore be seen to encompass all developmental stages from Pre-Service to Beginning Teacher to that of a more experienced teacher (AITSL, 2012; Dinham, 2008). In describing teaching as an ever-learning process, Ambrose, Bridges, De Pietro, Lovett and Norman (2010) also stated, “Thinking of teaching as a progressive refinement raises the notion of development, which happens in the context of a given climate” (p. 224). They then suggested that apart from students, instructors also need to engage with intellectual development. Such engagement might take the form of refining personal competence, integrity, educational purpose and dealing with emotions. The thrust of the argument proffered by Ambrose et al. is that the mentor-mentee relationship is best developed in an environment that is mutually beneficial in terms of professional development.

Mentoring involves both cognitive and emotional processes. From a cognitive perspective, mentees are encouraged to be active learners, be more aware of the learning needs of their children and be able to reflect with their mentor about how they can improve their teaching practices (Boreen, Johnson, Niday & Potts, 2009). A benefit of conceptualising mentoring from the cognitive perspective is the sharing of good work practices that not only benefit the mentee and mentor, but also the organisation and the wider profession (Nakamura, Shernoff & Hooker, 2009). Emotional processes, on the other hand, are required to enhance the mentor-mentee relationship in which the cognitive activity is being undertaken.

There has been a growth in research that recognises the increasing role that emotional development plays, especially in the key formative stages of a Beginning Teacher’s career (McNally & Blake, 2008; Watt & Richardson, 2011). McNally and Blake realised that, in addition to the cognitive processes, the emotional processes of teaching are important, especially for Beginning Teachers in their first months of teaching. The possession of emotional processes are necessary for reflecting on teaching practice. Although cognitive

processes are significant, they appear to be more relevant to a Beginning Teacher later in their first and second years of teaching rather than too early in the process. Moir, Barlin, Gless and Miles (2010) devised a model that demonstrated how Beginning Teachers go through a range of attitudes in their first year in the classroom. The model demonstrated how Beginning Teachers' attitudes vary from anticipation, to survival, to rejuvenation to reflection and back to anticipation. The recognition of the key emotional and cognitive processes in attitudinal development is seen as being necessary in establishing an effective mentoring framework.

### **Beginning Teachers and Emotions**

Assisting a Beginning Teacher in their development of new skills can energise them as a key member of a professional learning team. The longitudinal research of Watt and Richardson (2011) in their Influence Teacher Choice (FIT-Choice) study in Victoria, has studied the main concerns of teachers since 2002 of over 1,652 commencing pre-service teachers. It is the only study in the world to have followed the development of this number of Beginning Teachers over time and across several continents. Their results showed that, "Main concerns clustered around issues, which interact, to impact job satisfaction, leadership support, time pressure, relations with parents, and autonomy" (p. 29).

Of importance to this study is gaining an understanding of the emotional complexities faced by Beginning Teachers during mentoring. Hargreaves (1998) provided a link between emotions and the professional growth of Beginning Teachers, stating that, "For some this sense of growing confidence and competence was especially accented in their early years of becoming a teacher" (p. 848). He also suggested that emotions, particularly positive emotions, play a strong role in schools and lead to good teaching. Perry, Ball and Stacey (2004) have highlighted the relationship between expressed emotions and what Salovey and Mayer (1989) termed "emotional intelligence", stating that,

...interest in emotional intelligence has begun to emerge in the field of education. Change in current educational paradigms has encouraged a focus beyond that of the gaining of content knowledge and facts to now include learning as the core business of schools, the 'glue' of schools (Retrieved from <http://www.iier.org.au/iier14/perry.html>).

The fundamental importance of establishing a mentoring framework can be seen in establishing initial support for new teachers early in their careers, when emotionally they are at their most vulnerable (McNally & Blake, 2008). The need for such a supportive approach is evident in the literature (Boreen, Johnson, Niday & Potts, 2009; Feiman-Nemser, 1996; Jensen, Hunter, Sonnemann, Burns, 2012; Ingersoll & Smith, 2003; Watt & Richardson, 2011) and from this researcher's observations and experience as an administrator in six Catholic schools, of the urgent need to establish a mentoring framework for Beginning Teachers in each Catholic school community in Western Australia. The introduction of a mentoring framework would provide Beginning Teachers with ongoing support and guide them through their critical early stages of teaching.

Conversely if they are not assisted in the early stages of teaching, this deficit can demoralize a new teacher, forcing them to reach out to other colleagues for support or even leave the profession (Ambrose, Bridges, De Pietro, Lovett & Norman, 2010). Change can positively or negatively influence a teachers' own intellectual, social and emotional learning, regardless of where they are in their career. For Beginning Teachers, this ongoing emotional support, professional development and learning could be developed through the assistance of a mentor.

Research conducted by Corcoran and Tormey (2012) using Mayer and Salovey's emotional intelligence (EI) model with 352 Irish teaching undergraduates, lead them to conclude that, "there should be a strong case for Teacher training to insist on emotional skill development...stress and poor emotion management continually rank as the primary reasons why teachers become dissatisfied with the profession and end up leaving" (p. 750).

Accordingly, it was further suggested that, “teacher education programs might need to place a particular emphasis on the skills of perceiving emotions in self and others, and of understanding emotional changes and progressions” (p. 757). Perry and Ball (2007) concurred, stating, “Teachers are encouraged to provide for their students, a supportive and productive learning environment. To do this relies very much on the teacher’s emotional intelligence” (p. 9).

In terms of both cognitive and emotional processes, Read, Colgate, Corwin and Tax (2012) cited Dweck’s ongoing psychological research to highlight the importance of growth mindsets to both mentoring and coaching in the workforce. They stated,

People with a growth mindset tend to set learning goals, in which individuals seek to increase their competence, to understand or master something new. In contrast, those with fixed mindsets tend to have performance goals, where they seek to gain favourable judgments of their competence or avoid negative assessments (p. 28).

Such an insight caused them to conclude that,

From a coaching perspective, both the coach and the coachee need to have a growth mindset for coaching programs to succeed. Entering into the coaching partnership without such a mindset destines any coaching activity for failure and a waste of company resources (p. 28).

Dweck’s growth mindset is an important concept in examining the emotional aspect of the mentor and mentee relationship. This aspect of mentoring is important as it is related to the judgements that are made personally and professionally from the mentoring experience. The ability of both mentor and mentee to react to positive and/or negative feedback, for example, potentially affects the direction of the mentoring relationship in the school.

Riley (2010; 2013) similarly applied lessons from attachment theory in psychology to educational mentoring. In 2010 he stated that, “to ignore or deny teachers’ emotions is to ignore or deny their humanity and therefore their authentic selves in the classroom context” (p. 41). His research made key points in relation to growing the emotional identity of

Beginning Teachers and their ongoing awareness of their own teaching model when considering the needs of their students. He (2010) emphasized that, “a teacher’s introduction to the profession, during pre-service education, induction, mentoring and support, is crucial in the construction and reconstruction of the professional internal working model and for the initial professional construction of a professional identity” (pp. 35-6).

Riley also highlighted the importance for all teachers, including Beginning Teachers, to learn strategies like meditation to avoid burnout and stress, thus so helping them with detachment from certain stressful classroom situations (Riley, 2013). His findings have implications for how teachers are trained at the university in terms of placing greater emphasis on the emotional processes of pre-service and Beginning Teachers. Such training might be provided through systemic mentoring training programs, the establishment of one-on-one mentoring training opportunities in a school, or through a team of teachers in a professional learning environment. In summary, it might be concluded that the training and selection of mentors is of global importance to the future of teacher improvement and professional development through engagement with effective mentoring protocols (Feiman-Nemser, 1996; Fantili and McDougall, 2009; McNally & Blake, 2008; McNally & Orberski, 2003; Rippon & Martin 2003, Reilly, 2010).

On the basis of the foregoing discussion, the research questions to be investigated follow. These will be elaborated upon in chapter three of the thesis.

**PRIMARY OVERARCHING RESEARCH QUESTION:**

To what extent is early career mentoring operating effectively in Catholic school environments in Western Australia?

**SUBSIDIARY QUESTIONS:**

- 1) Does participation in a mentoring program for Early Career Teachers affect their career aspirations?

- 2) What perceptions do CUWA Post-Internship (Pre-Service) teachers hold regarding mentoring prior to the commencement of their teaching career?
- 3) How have graduate teacher perceptions of mentoring changed as a result of having been teaching for three school terms?
- 4) What perceptions regarding mentoring do new graduates hold at the commencement of their teaching career?
- 5) What perceptions do principals have of how mentoring is conceived of in a Catholic School?

INTEGRATIVE QUESTION:

On the basis of Questions 1-5, what are considered to be the key principles that underpin the development of a Pre-Service and Beginning Teacher mentoring framework?

The next chapter presents a review of the literature relating to the research questions and does so within the context of an international, a national and state perspective. The literature review includes a previously little known aspect of the dynamic past history of mentoring Beginning Teachers in Western Australia. It also explores mentoring options for those currently teaching in Western Australian Catholic schools.



## **CHAPTER 2**

### **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

#### **Introduction**

This chapter reviews the literature that is pertinent to the research questions presented earlier. The chapter examines the mentoring literature as it applies to the educational context. In order to learn from other contexts, the literature review at times goes beyond the educational context to provide a broader perspective on mentoring. The chapter commences with a review of international, national and state literature; moves to examining the benefits of mentoring; traverses mentoring as it applies in the field of education and within a Catholic education environment; and concludes with a discussion of the importance of leadership in mentoring.

#### **International literature on mentoring**

The impetus for the design of a new mentoring framework for the support of Pre-Service and Early Career Teachers, has been influenced by significant international research from authors such as Ingersoll & Smith (2003): Fantili & McDougall (2009): Pascarelli (in Goodlad, 1998): Feiman-Nemser (1996); and Rippon and Martin (2003). The work of Ingersoll and Smith (2003), raised the importance of professional development for leaders, mentees and mentors involved in a mentoring program. They stated: “Increasing support from school administrators for new teachers, for example, might range from providing enough classroom supplies to providing mentors. Mentors are especially critical” (p. 33). Similarly, Fantili and McDougall (2009), outlined the importance of mentor training for the emotional well-being of mentees. In their study they found, “Mentor training and qualification was imperative to successfully meet the multiple and complex demands of the role of mentor” (p. 824).

Pascarella (in Goodlad, 1998) outlined a four-stage mentoring model for building self-confidence in youths who undertook a mentoring program at their school. The stages included “initiation; cultivation; transformation and separation” (p. 231). The benefit of understanding these stages when considering the proposal for a mentoring program that could assist the emotional and cognitive well-being of Early Career Teachers was proffered. The significant issue was the need for ongoing mentor training that could benefit an Early Career Teacher in their transition from dependence to autonomy. Rippon and Martin (2003) further indicated that the success of a mentoring relationship was determined by “the interplay of the personal intelligences and the skills of the participants” involved in the mentoring process (p. 26). The positive effect that a mentoring programs can have for the well-being of Beginning Teachers, however, was influenced by the ongoing system support and training of mentors (Feiman-Nemser, 1996; Rippon & Martin, 2003). Feiman-Nemser (1996), further found the financial support offered by both system and State leaders could heavily influence the quality and future success of the mentoring experience:

By promoting observation and conversation about teaching, mentoring can help teachers develop tools for continuous improvement. If learning to teach in reform-minded ways is the focus of this joint work, mentoring will also fulfil its promise as an instrument of reform. Unfortunately budget shortfalls...may be leading districts and states to eliminate mentoring programs before this possibility is realized (pp. 4-5).

Many international and national reports written over the past twenty years have provided Australian universities and school education systems with important findings about the mentoring of Beginning Teachers, for example, An Ethic of Care (2002); United Kingdom (UK), House of Commons Children, Schools and Families Committee report on the Training of Teachers (2010); OECD Teacher education and the teaching career in an era of lifelong learning Working Paper (2002); Teaching Standards (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership [AITSL], (2011b); and Top of the class: Report on the

inquiry into teacher education (2007). Over the last 10 years, there has been a slight decline in the performance of Australia's education system in the OECD 'Program for International Student Assessment' (PISA) and 'Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study' (TIMSS) testing results for Reading, Mathematics and Science (Santiago, Donaldson, Herman & Shewbridge, 2011). The direct correlation that might be drawn between the development of mentoring programs for teachers and the success of educational results from leading OECD countries like Finland, China and Singapore, was explored by Jensen, Hunter, Sonnemann & Burns (2012). Their Gratten Institute Report, examined the success of three Asian countries with high academic results from The OECD PISA testing. The report found that the success of these high performing countries was significantly due to the establishment of effective teacher mentoring practices (Jensen, Hunter, Sonnemann & Burns, 2012). The UK House of Commons: Children, School and Families report on Training of Teachers, was released in February 2010. The report highlighted the importance of mentoring in the development of Beginning Teachers. One of the key recommendations of this UK report was also visible in the development of the current AITSL professional standards in Australia. This UK report declared that, "Mentoring is seen as one of the core professional standards for teachers. Despite this, mentoring of trainees is still not seen as a central requirement of all teachers, as it is, for example, for the medical profession" (p. 35). The 2013 UK Department for Education Report, Induction for newly qualified teachers (England), further reported that all Early Career Teachers (or termed Newly Qualified Teachers) would benefit from an Induction process of at least one year (p. 16).

### **National literature on mentoring**

Significant Government and independent research over the last twenty years has been conducted in Australia. In particular, the two reports, An Ethic of Care (Department of Education Tasmania, 2002) and Top of the class: Report on the inquiry into teacher education

(Australian Parliament, 2007), highlighted the importance of mentoring Beginning Teachers for the future of the teaching profession in Australia. In 2008, Australian State and Federal education ministers signed The Melbourne Declaration (2008). This action initiated important legislation across Australia, which recognised the establishment of two structures vital to the future of Australian education. These were:

1. The Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA). The establishment of this Authority, created a common ground for education systems across Australia to begin work on a National Curriculum (Phase 1); and
2. The Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL), which in 2013 pursued the establishment of teaching and principal standards across Australia. These standards make explicit the content of what constitutes high quality teaching from a graduate to the more experienced lead teacher level.

With the creation of ACARA in 2008 and AITSL at the end of 2010, the National School Improvement Tool (NSIT; Masters, 2012) was created for all school systems across Australia to assist school leaders with addressing the area of school improvement. The NSIT Tool identified mentoring as one of the strategies necessary to improve teaching standards. Masters (2012) stated that, in the service of mentoring, “Teachers visit each other’s classrooms and welcome opportunities to have principals and other school leaders observe and discuss their work with them” (domain 5, p. 11).

The relevance of the NSIT to the study for mentoring Beginning Teachers in Catholic Education was clearly stated in two critical domains:

1. Building a school culture that promotes learning (domain 3, p. 6) and
2. Developing an expert teaching team (domain 5, p. 10)

## **Local literature on mentoring**

A research group from The University of South Australia, Murdoch University and Edith Cowan University in Perth began work in 2009, involving all Western Australian and South Australia School sectors (State, Catholic and Independent) and various education union organisations regarding Early Career Teacher resilience. The group developed a framework of conditions that support Early Career Teacher (ECT) resilience (Johnson, Down, Le Cornu, Peters, Sullivan, Pearce & Hunter, 2010). The researchers identified five key factors to build resilience in Beginning Teachers: Relationships, School Culture, Teacher Identity, Teachers' Work and Policies and Practices. The above-mentioned research group, will use these key factors as a basis for creating future professional development modules for Beginning Teachers (Johnson, Down, Le Cornu, Peters, Sullivan, Pearce & Hunter, 2010). The only professional development in Induction offered to ECTs in Western Australia in 2017 was through self-support groups such as Network Teach and the State Government's WA Graduate Program, that are specifically aimed at ECTs employed by the Education Department of Western Australia. As Jensen, Hunter, Sonnemann and Burns (2012) stated regarding the design features of a best practice mentoring program,

While many systems around the world have induction and mentoring programs, few are done well. Shanghai is the gold standard. Its induction and mentoring programs involve frequent classroom observation with constructive feedback, a practice known to improve student learning (p. 23).

When one considers the potential positive impact a teacher could have on the learning of their students, the establishment of a mentoring framework is seen as one critical factor in raising both the professional standing of teaching in society and improving the learning experiences of students. Hattie's (2003) research also suggested, "We should focus on the greatest source of variance that can make the difference – the teacher. We need to ensure that

this greatest influence is optimised to have powerful and sensationally positive effects on the learner” (p. 3).

This particular study proposes that Beginning Teachers can make a greater difference to the teaching profession if there is a mentor teacher assisting them along their journey. The mentor is the one in this relationship who can provide the opportunities for a Beginning Teacher’s personal and professional growth. As numerous authors have suggested (DuFour, 2004; Freeman-Loftis, 2011; Hayes & Noonan, 2008; Malone, 2012; Sedgwick, 2008), the mentor’s sharing of knowledge is essential in assisting and so improving the mentee’s performance.

The NSIT and The Catholic Education Office of Western Australia (CEOWA) Quality Catholic Schools (QCS) Project are working documents designed to assist schools with the combined legislative and accountability requirements respectively, of The CEOWA, and State and Federal governments. Furthermore, the development of the NSIT underpinned the revision of The CEOWA QCS Project. The original 24 components of the QCS Project introduced in 2008, were reduced to 14 components in 2014. These components were developed to assist schools with the ongoing self-review process of school improvement (CEOWA, 2014), which has clear implications for school-based mentoring.

The CEOWA, through the QCS Project components, requires Catholic schools to annually self-review up to four of these 14 components over a four-year cycle. Each Catholic school selects several teams of staff to gather evidence in the provision of a rating for their yearly QCS Project components. The rating given for each yearly component is between one and seven, with one being the lowest level and seven the highest. The levels refer to the degree of competency achieved for a particular component.

The QCS Project component which specifically related to a school’s mentoring program is Component 305; “An Expert Teaching Team”. The description of QCS

component 305, as presented in Figure 2.1, identifies key developmental pointers for rating the component. Once the staff team has collected evidence for the QCS component, the school leadership team then checks and analyses the rating of staff evidence for the selected QCS component.

*School Rating 6:*

There is a documented professional learning plan and the school has arrangements in place for mentoring and coaching. Teachers visit each other's classrooms and welcome opportunities to have principals and other school leaders observe and discuss work with them

*School Rating 4:*

Teachers are open to constructive feedback and provide feedback to colleagues, although there may not be formal mentoring or coaching arrangements in place

*School Rating 2:*

The development of a professional school-wide team does not appear to be a driving consideration of the principal or other school leaders (e.g. no reference is made to the National Professional Standards for Teachers, there are no mentoring arrangements in place, teachers work largely in isolation from one another 'behind closed doors')

*Figure 2.1* QCS Component 305 rating description. (Reproduced from CEOWA 'Quality Catholic Schools Project' (2014); copyright State of Queensland Department of Education, Training and Employment and the Australian Council for Educational Research 2012).

The Principal School Advisor (PSA), the delegated person of the CEOWA selected to meet with the principal, uses the school rating information from the QCS Project process together with the NSIT to systemically report on a school's accountability and governance structures. The QCS Project and NSIT are both useful processes for school self-review. Despite the strength of both The QCS and NSIT processes, there is no direct instruction for a school to improve and develop their own mentoring program from the NSIT or QCS Project component rating. The benefits for whole school improvement through the establishment of a mentoring framework were identified in the literature review and included:

1. Assigning an on-site mentor to a mentee (Alliance for Excellent Education (AEE), 2004; Butler, Dickinson & Pittard, 2003; Nakamura et al., 2009).

2. Regularly identifying, sharing and investigating best teaching practice which can be assisted by a mentor providing supportive feedback to a mentee (Dobbins, Mitchell & Murray, 1998).
3. Developing a mentoring program in a school which supports continual school improvement. Supporting a mentoring program helps to develop a culture of stewardship through supportive leadership (Boreen et al., 2009; Freeman-Loftis, 2011).

This section has investigated the importance of understanding international, national and local trends prior to developing any mentoring framework. Literature has indicated that the teacher is key in any education of children; mentoring ought to be seen as core business of teacher facilitation; and mentoring those who teach may lead to children receiving higher scores on international tests. Attention is now turned to a further discussion of the benefits of mentoring.

#### **The difficulties associated with mentoring in the teaching profession.**

When one considers the benefits of a mentoring program, it is a distinct possibility that schools without a mentoring program may leave Beginning Teachers devoid of the support required to negotiate the first year of teaching. As an example, graduates could be left to deal independently with a student's violent behaviour, cultural and language learning needs. An inexperienced graduate may also be faced with students undergoing a sudden life event change, which they themselves have not experienced, for example, separation anxiety, depression or parental divorce. Such often-emotional experiences could be too much for Beginning Teachers to handle by themselves (McNally & Blake, 2008; Moir, Barlin, Gless & Miles, 2010). Consequently, providing a Beginning Teacher with a mentor is essential for establishing a mentoring framework in a school, or in the case of the study being proposed here, a Catholic school in Western Australia.



There are numerous benefits associated with supporting a mentoring system in a school context (Murray, Mitchell & Dobbins, 1998), including in the areas of teaching and learning, professional development, school improvement, and personal stewardship. These are now considered in greater detail. Firstly, improvement in teaching and learning practices can be achieved through assigning an on-site mentor to a mentee. By having co-existing Duties Other Than Teaching (DOTT) release time for mentor and mentee, the mentor is able to provide immediate feedback to a mentee. The discussion of any teaching concerns, student concerns, school policies and procedures of the school then assists a mentee in the clarification of information in the early stages of their teaching career. Such a benefit finds agreement in the literature (Freeman-Loftis, 2011; McNally & Oberski, 2003; McNally & Blake, 2012; Nakamura, Shernoff & Hooker, 2009).

Secondly, the regular identification, sharing and investigation of best teaching practice can be assisted by a mentor providing supportive feedback to a mentee. In this way, a mentor directly observes the mentee in the classroom leading to suggestions that can improve teaching and learning practices being utilised in a classroom. By providing direct feedback to a mentee in an honest and constructive manner, the mentee can learn from the teaching experiences of their mentor and then share these ideas with other teachers in the school. This strategy too finds agreement in the literature (Alliance for Excellent Education (AEE), 2004; Boreen, Johnson, Niday & Potts, 2009; Freeman-Loftis, 2011; Nakamura, Shernoff & Hooker, 2009).

A third benefit of developing a mentoring program in a school revolves around supporting continual school improvement. Through conducting regular professional learning community (PLC) meetings in a school, a mentoring program assists a mentee by visiting their own mentor's classroom and other teachers' classrooms, or directly involving them in the sharing of teaching ideas with other teachers. This could involve researching improved

methods of teaching by working collaboratively with other staff. Mentoring therefore plays an active role in building and sustaining a professional learning community, as identified in the literature (Freeman-Loftis, 2011; Hudson, 2010b; Hayes & Noonan, 2008).

Fourthly, supporting a mentoring program helps to develop a culture of stewardship through supportive leadership. Providing on-going time, financial allocation and support for mentor training in the school timetable and budget signals to the staff that mentoring is an important aspect of the school's mission. Such school support may be even further enhanced by financially rewarding mentors for their extra duties (Alliance for Excellence Education, 2004). Finally, the development of on-going teacher professional development and skill acquisition may be strengthened via a mentoring program (Dickinson, Butler & Pittard, 2003). This benefit is also highlighted in a finding from the Alliance for Excellence Education (AEE) which stated, "...even great teachers will not mentor successfully without additional training" (2004, p. 14). Such training is needed to improve existing knowledge of the mentor about best teaching practices in a school community, and can then be shared from the mentor to a mentee. Providing mentors with the opportunity to share their newly found knowledge can potentially lead to the development of leadership qualities.

Research by McNally and Blake (2008, 2012), Jensen and Reichel (2011), and Hudson, Skamp and Brooks (2005), regarding ECT professional development needs, further assisted in identifying the significant factors of a mentoring framework (Table 2.1). McNally and Blake's research with reference to the importance of emotional support in the initial stages of a Beginning Teacher's career, has already been identified from the literature, as a critical focus for this study.

Jensen and Reichel (2011) identified six key factors for providing feedback and appraisal to teachers that can be equally applied to mentoring and are listed in Table 2.1. They suggested good schools considered at least four of these factors when providing

feedback to teachers. There is however a perceived lack of feedback being provided to all teachers and this is what Jensen and Reichel (2011) identified as a weakness of the present Australian education system. They suggested; “All studies show that more effective teachers are the key to producing higher performing students...at present Australia’s systems of teacher appraisal and feedback are broken, and students are suffering as a result” (p. 3). At the school level, if the principal chooses not to take on this role or does not have the skills to implement quality feedback, then teaching and learning can break down. Mentoring is therefore seen as one critical strategy that can assist in the provision of quality feedback, so assisting Beginning Teachers in improving their teaching and in the process, more effectively assisting the learning of their students (Jensen, Hunter, Sonnemann & Burns, 2012; Jensen & Sonnemann, 2014).

Finally, Hudson, Skamp and Brooks’s research (2005) and Hudson’s research (2010b) with over one hundred mentors across nine Australian universities, revealed five key factors for effective mentoring. These key factors included awareness of the mentor’s personal attributes, knowledge of system requirements, pedagogical knowledge, modeling of their own teaching practices and provision of quality feedback. An example of Hudson, Skamp and Brook’s (2005) Mentoring for Effective Teaching (MET) Model was utilised for the training of some of The University of Notre Dame Australia’s teaching practice supervisors in 2011(personal communication, November 23<sup>rd</sup> 2011). The School of Education at the Queensland University of Technology also used this model through its MET professional development program, to train teachers and principals in ways of building capacity through mentoring (Hudson, 2010a). This study will explore whether the current feedback and modeling provided to a mentee in a Catholic school benefits or hinders their aspirations in developing their career as a teacher, and in the process determines whether the establishment of a mentoring framework could be of further assistance to their teaching.

The research cited in Table 2.1 possesses common elements that relate to mentoring and are presented to show how researchers appear to show agreement on the fundamentals of mentoring. McNally and Blake's (2008, 2012) seven emotional-relational categories are used as the descriptors against which the research of Jensen and Reichel (2011) and Hudson, Skamp and Brook (2005) are referenced. The combined research is also seen as the starting point for any principal considering the development of a school-based mentoring program. The key elements as identified in the Table are: providing emotional support for the Beginning Teacher, articulating clear expectations for the mentor, and implementing structures needed to improve teaching and learning at the school level.

Table 2.1

*Common Elements in Key Mentoring Research: Comparison using McNally and Blake's Seven Emotional-Relational Categories.*

<b>McNally and Blake (2008, 2012)</b>	<b>Jensen and Reichel (2011)</b>	<b>Hudson, Skamp and Brook's Model (2005)</b>
Identifying and defining seven emotional-relational categories of a Beginning Teachers' Early Professional Learning:	Improving Learning and Teaching performance through school leadership using at least four of the following feedback instruments:	Identifying desirable mentor attributes:
1. <i>Emotional</i> : the range and intensity of feeling from anxiety and despair to delight and fulfillment that permeate the new teachers' descriptions of their learning.	1. Peer observation and collaboration	1. The personal attributes of the mentor.
2. <i>Relational</i> : the set of social interactions, mainly with pupils and colleagues, which produced the crucial relationships for the new teachers' professional identity and role.	2. Direct observation of classroom teaching and learning	2. Mentoring in the essential education System Requirements
3. <i>Structural</i> : the organisational aspects of the school itself and the wider educational system, including roles, rules and procedures that govern not only teachers' entry into the profession, also within society.	3. Student surveys and feedback	3. The mentor's Pedagogical Knowledge
4. <i>Material</i> : concrete manifestation of structure as resources, rooms etc. as they apply to new teachers.	4. Self-assessment	4. The mentor's Modelling of teaching practices, and
5. <i>Cognitive</i> : the explicit understandings that tend to be applied in professional practice including curriculum knowledge, assessment techniques, and differentiated teaching, and which include the professional standard.	5. Parent surveys and feedback	5. Quality feedback provided by the mentor
6. <i>Ethical</i> : the new teachers' expressed sense (explicit and implicit) of commitment and care.	6. External observation	
7. <i>Temporal</i> : recognises that these dimensions have trajectories that represent both ontological and epistemological change over the induction year and give expression to purpose		

This section has addressed the benefits that one might expect from engaging with a mentoring framework. These include having a better understanding of system and school

exigencies; providing an opportunity to dialogue difficult or unfamiliar situations; being engaged in professional growth and personal development; finding new strategies for more effective teaching and learning via feedback; experiencing a feeling of “really making a difference” as a result of new discoveries; and creating a pool of mentees who may become future mentors.

### **Mentoring and the Teaching Profession.**

Common difficulties experienced by those new to the profession have also been identified from the literature. Some of these difficulties included classroom management concerns; finding a common time to meet with their mentor; and indeed finding a suitable mentor (Department of Education Tasmania, 2002; Gadusova & Viteckova, 2013; Wilson, 2012). The Education 2002 working paper of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) confirmed the existence of such difficulties and further stated,

...Beginning Teachers who are provided with continuous support by a skilled mentor are much less likely to leave the profession, are more likely to get beyond personal and class management concerns quickly and to focus on student learning sooner (Coolahan, 2002).

A valuable Australian study on Beginning Teachers undertaken by Adoniou (2013) expressed similar concerns that difficulties encountered may have unintended consequences,

Some estimate the attrition rates in teaching to be as high as 30 percent in the first three years. The truth is we don't know the exact numbers. With so many teachers employed casually upon graduation, there is no data on how many of them just give up on the profession. They simply disappear-and there is no exit interview to find out what has prompted them to leave (p. 19).

Furthermore, Adoniou's study followed 14 teachers through their first 16 months of teaching. Adoniou recounts the following, “About three months into the study one of the teachers made a plea – Don't let me forget the teacher I wanted to be” (p. 19). The study highlighted problems of graduate teachers being employed on temporary contracts and for that reason

possibly walking away from teaching. Job insecurity is a potential problem faced by many graduate teachers in their first years of teaching, especially when they are not provided with the necessary feedback from their mentor or school leadership team.

Similarly to Adoniou's account, Whitaker and Fiore (2013) addressed new teacher attrition in the United States of America and concluded that, "... the best way to support, develop, and cultivate an attitude of lifelong learning in new teachers is through an induction program ... high quality mentoring programs have found that attrition rates for new teachers dropped by more than two-thirds from their previous levels" (p. 109). The implementation of successful mentoring programs to prevent the loss of Beginning Teachers is potentially a massive cost saving tool for education systems. More importantly, the benefits to the profession of mentoring can be seen not purely from a Beginning Teachers perspective but for teachers in all career stages. Such a perspective was identified by Hanuscin and Lee (2008) who stated that, "The value of mentoring is not limited to new teachers; experienced teachers also benefit by serving as mentors" (pp. 56).

Hudson (2010b) argued that the most credible way of improving the teaching profession in Australia was through supporting pre-existing teacher education courses. It was further argued that teacher education courses ought to cover aspects relating to the importance, identification and facilitation of teacher mentors. How mentors and pre-service mentor teachers and university supervisors are currently trained and selected, it was also argued, ought to be closely scrutinized.

In 2010, The Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) standards for Teaching were introduced for all education sectors in Australia (AITSL, 2011b). Since then, there has been the advent of The Australian Teacher Performance and Development Framework endorsed by Federal and State Education Ministers at the Standing Council on School Education and Early Childhood (SCSEEC) in August 2012 (AITSL,

2012); and the unveiling in early 2017 of a resource for mentors and school leaders called *My Induction*, which was developed as an I-Pad and Windows Application. This has demonstrated a renewed interest by Federal and State governments in viewing mentoring as an effective tool for creating more professional and collaborative teachers capable of improving student learning (AITSL, 2011b, 2012, 2017; Hudson, 2010b; Jensen, Hunter, Sonnemann & Burns, 2012).

It appears that teacher selection and training is back in the national spotlight since former Federal Education Minister, Christopher Pyne, announced the establishment of a Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group, in February 2014. In response to the announcement, one newspaper reported, “The quality of our teachers is on the education agenda of governments across the world. With the vitally important role a teacher plays in a child's education, it should come as no surprise that training excellent teachers is a top priority for the Coalition government” (“A quality education begins with the best teachers”, 2014). Adoniou (2013), with reference to Pyne’s vision for quality teachers in education commented, “...quality teachers are leaving and we need to be clear about why. If we misunderstand the reasons, then we offer misguided solutions” (p. 19). Perhaps a greater focus on mentoring those new to the profession may go a long way to alleviating the concerns of all parties interested in arresting teacher attrition.

This section has summarized mentoring opportunities related to issues of honing classroom management skills; maintaining a positive vision of the profession; engaging with the latest technology; and developing a sense of professional competence. The next section examines various models of mentoring which assist in reaping the benefits in the teaching profession.



## **Models of Mentoring and their Possible Application for the Teaching Profession.**

Models of mentoring are numerous, although the vast majority share the common elements identified in Table 2.1. Corrigan and Loughran (2008) elaborated on the elements presented in Table 2.1 by offering the following insights,

For mentoring to flourish attention needs to be paid to the need for: shared understandings of mentoring; an awareness of the positives and negatives such relationships can offer; support for such programs particularly in terms of human, financial and system resources; the provision of appropriate mentor training for participants to aid in a shared understanding; consideration given to the selection of participants; and, appropriate evaluation of the mentoring programs (pp. 4-5).

Bartlett-Bragg (2015) described several models of how the mentoring relationship is envisaged in current work environments, these being:

1. The traditional (a relationship between a more knowledgeable and experienced employee (mentor) with an inexperienced employee (mentee).;
2. Reverse (both the mentor and mentee reciprocally assist each other in a practical work-based task where a mentor shares their knowledge of strategies for dealing with various situation that may arise;
3. Peer (unlike the traditional model, the peer model envisages mentees working with multiple colleagues, of which a mentee is considered an equal. The sharing of each member's knowledge is utilised to enhance understanding of a common work-based task, such as moderating a narrative writing task).
4. Network (the use of multiple mentors from either within or outside an organization is used to enrich the experiences of a mentee); and
5. Hybrid (the continuous acquisition of knowledge through a varied mix of professional development and management models that form a type of mentoring yet to be categorised).

With many authors espousing the benefits of mentoring (Corrigan & Loughran, 2008; Hanuscin & Lee, 2008; Whitaker & Fiore, 2013), the present study examines six current mentoring programs that utilize aspects of the above-mentioned models of mentoring. These six programs provide examples of mentoring from a national, systemic, other profession/s and local school level and may have significant relevance to developing a mentoring framework for Catholic schools in Western Australia:

### ***1) New Teacher Centre - USA***

The New Teacher Centre is an example of a Network mentoring model. The establishment of the New Teacher Centre in 1998 has assisted the United States education system since that time in the training and support of over 6,300 mentors and 26,000 teachers across America. Teachers originally founded this program as part of a University of California course at Santa Cruz. In 2009 it became an independent non-profit organisation whose aim was to improve teacher effectiveness, improve mentor training and develop mentoring and induction programs through the education of administrators and Beginning Teachers. A great deal of the funding for this Centre came from donations sourced from philanthropists and from some of the United States' biggest private corporations. Further funding has come through fees earned from services provided through their mentoring and induction training programs (Retrieved from <http://www.newteachercenter.org/about-ntc>).

The potential for this program to further improve teacher effectiveness could aid Catholic education with the establishment of a similar centre. This could be strategically supported through AITSL with financial support from Federal and State governments. Further funding could be sourced from private business corporations. The benefit of this type of mentoring program has been proven through the New Teacher Centres with their ability to improve the teaching profession from within its own ranks. This has been achieved by the selective training of Beginning Teachers, mentors and administrators. Universities provided

the program trainers with access to latest research trends, which allowed mentors to learn the state-of-the-art techniques for execution with Beginning Teachers.

## ***2) The Alliance for Catholic Education (ACE)***

The Alliance for Catholic Education is an example of a Hybrid mentoring model. The Alliance for Catholic Education is a University of Notre Dame (USA) initiative. For over 20 years this program has underpinned the training of Beginning Teachers at the University of Notre Dame. Catholic schools are assisted by the University with graduate teachers to assist some of the most under-resourced Catholic schools in the United States. The strength of the ACE program over the last 20 years is that it has been replicated and implemented by other countries and universities (Retrieved from <https://ace.nd.edu/international/initiatives>). As stated in the ACE 2016/17 Handbook for Principals and Mentors,

ACE annually places approximately 160 college graduates in over 100 parochial schools throughout the United States. To carry out its core teaching mission, ACE recruits talented graduates from numerous select colleges and universities. ACE teachers represent a broad variety of undergraduate disciplines, with a diverse set of backgrounds and experiences. ACE provides an intensive two-year service experience encompassing professional development, community life, and spiritual growth. (p. 7).

There exists a current lack of research about mentoring programs being implemented in Western Australian Catholic Schools. However, the appeal of an ACE-type program is supported in the work of Mayotte, Wei, Lamphier and Doyle (2013), who concluded that more research needs to be carried out to verify the success of the program in terms of career longevity. Perhaps such future research could capitalize on and extend the work of Lucilio (2009), who identified the link between professional development and mentoring for the different needs of secondary teachers, school administrators, and diocesan administrators using a mid-western Catholic diocese sample. Lucilio, found that “hands-on participation and

demonstration as the most beneficial in-service methods, and training and mentoring as the most likely methods to improve teacher performance” (p. 72).

The advantage of implementing an ACE-type program in Western Australian Catholic schools would be the utilization of the reciprocal learning relationship that exists between The University of Notre Dame (USA) and The Catholic University of Western Australia campuses in Fremantle, Broome and Sydney. The success of this program in the United States has been in assisting Catholic schools in staffing difficult schools through the provision of graduate teachers over the last 20 years.

### ***3) Learning Walks***

The use of Learning Walks is an example of a reverse mentoring model. Biss and Dunne (2011) described Learning Walks as essential for new principals and new teaching staff. Learning Walks occur when a “a mentor and mentee embark on a walk through a school” (p. 1) and share information about student learning utilising reflection to motivate dialogue. Biss and Dunne found that, “Through the shared experience of the learning walk, purposeful questions that lead to rich learning conversations can be discovered” (p. 1).

The benefit of the Learning Walk program lies in the mentoring support provided to a new principal from a peer. An adaption of this strategy could be for a beginning teacher from a peer mentor not based in the same school. The potential of such a program could allow the mentor to step back from the politics of a school environment and provide fresh ideas from another perspective, possibly even another culture. Communication could also take place with a mentor via internet technology such as Skype. Program success using technology between teachers and students in remote Victorian schools has already shown the benefits of such a scheme (Marshall, 2013).

#### ***4) Open Doors***

The use of Open Doors is an example of a Network mentoring model. A program similar to the Instructional Rounds used with novice doctors but called *Open Doors*, has been undertaken in the Western Australian Catholic School where the researcher is currently employed. It has operated over the last three years in conjunction with two other Catholic schools. Staff are given professional readings and peer learning tasks which are shared among all teaching staff in the three schools involved in the program. Resource materials are based on a learning area or general need common to all three schools, for example, narrative writing moderation, or the challenges of mentoring a novice teacher. Meetings are held once a term with after-school meetings shared between the three campuses, with class teachers in each school taking turns hosting the meetings. This has resulted in increased professional sharing of ideas between each of the schools and within several curriculum areas.

The Open Doors program, though in a formative phase, evolved in 2014 to provide greater teacher feedback and coaching opportunities for staff in each of the three schools. As a result of this process, there had been some confusion over the terms coaching and mentoring as used between schools. Despite similar processes being used amongst the schools, one group of upper primary teachers, defined the term peer mentoring to describe their task; whilst teachers from the other schools, described their plan as peer coaching or shoulder-to-shoulder teaching. The professional learning successes that should have been celebrated by the three schools was unfortunately overshadowed by a lengthy and unresolved discussion over semantics. Such a situation highlights the need for conceptual clarification of terminology prior to engaging in dialogue around an area of mutual interest.

#### ***5) Cambridge University Study: Wroxham Primary***

The Cambridge University Study is an example of a Traditional mentoring model. A Cambridge University study conducted by Swann, Peacock, Hart and Drummond (2012)

described the following whole school mentoring program from Wroxham Primary, in Hertfordshire, UK. The researchers identified three leadership priorities which assisted the school in determining its core purpose. These were, that staff could trust in the smooth running of the school in the knowledge that efficient systems were in place; that staff were protected by the leadership team from unnecessary outside pressures and expectations, thus allowing staff to focus on teaching and learning; and that shared values of respect and celebration were backed by staff, who also knew that if they needed support, it was available. The researchers stated that an all-staff “mentoring system helped strengthen and sustain feelings of empathy, mutual recognition and collective responsibility across the staff team as a whole” (p. 83). The strength of this mentoring model was undergirded by the willingness of the leadership team to support staff participation in making a conscious effort to improve teaching and learning through ongoing professional learning.

This section has examined the benefits of a variety of mentoring models and programs. Elements of these models and programs could help in the establishment of a mentoring framework for Catholic Schools in Western Australia. The examination of different styles of mentoring programs may enable the Catholic Education system in Western Australia to better meet and assist with the future mentoring of Beginning Teachers. As Dunne and Vilianni (2007) pointed out,

When teachers, like dancers, have the necessary mirrors, they are able to check actual performance against their intended plan and are able to better understand where and when to make adjustments. Mentors can provide “mirrors” for new teachers through collaborative coaching and other practices that support reflection (p. 55).

#### ***6) Three Examples of Mentoring from other Professions***

As has been shown, mentoring is considered important for the future of ongoing learning in Education (Corrigan & Loughran, 2008; Hanuscin & Lee, 2008; Whitaker & Fiore, 2013). Educators may also glean ideas from other professions that are involved in the

mentoring of novices. There may be direct or indirect lessons that can be transferred into the educational setting to further enhance the profession.

***a) Australian Rules Football (AFL)***

The first example of mentoring from outside the teaching profession comes from Australian Rules Football (AFL) and is an example of a traditional mentoring model. In this sport, coaching and mentoring play an important role, with Football clubs spending millions of dollars in insuring they have the best coach, assistant coaches and support structures in place to develop and mentor the best young players (Thring, 2014). In 2012 alone, the AFL spent some \$8 million dollars on Indigenous programs. One of these programs was a mentoring program called *Footy Means Business*, with the AFL providing this program to some 46 indigenous mentees.

Although successes were noted, it was revealed that the *Footy Means Business* program was too resource intensive for its staff and that future outsourcing of the program might need to be considered. A submission to Federal Parliament included the words, “It was identified that our staff also needed further training in mentoring, particularly given some of the difficult issues that many of our participants are facing” (Australian Parliament, 2013, p. 1). Apart from the need for further training, retired AFL coach Leigh Matthews (2013) made a further observation that might impede the success of any mentoring program, stating, “...the modern coach (as well as parents, school teachers, or police, for that matter) has an enormous challenge to sell to the individual the belief that being subservient to the group cause is a necessary element in being part of a successful team...” (p. 491).

With regard to the education context, what can be learned from the AFL experience is that dedicated programs can be costly; staff time may need to be quarantined by outsourcing some mentoring tasks; mentors need support and an umbrella organization oversight keeps the program accountable.

### ***b) Dental Hygienists of Ontario***

The second example of mentoring from a profession different to education is an example of a Peer mentoring model and was sourced from The College of Dental Hygienists of Ontario, whose mentoring program provided hygienists with five years of clinical experience and at least two years of experience in Ontario, the opportunity to nominate as a volunteer mentor. The College's (2013) statement on mutuality in mentoring is particularly relevant for schools trying to establish and nurture a mentoring culture amongst their staff. It states, "...mentoring sees mentors and mentees as learning partners who are exposed to new ideas, other perspectives, and intellectual stimulation brought into the relationship by both parties" (p. 11).

Mentoring in education could benefit by taking on board the College's emphasis on equal and reciprocal status as it applies to mentors and mentees; the voluntary status of those who self-refer as mentors; and the motivation that is generated by oversight from a formal collegiate body.

### ***c) Instructional Rounds***

Instructional Rounds, as participated in by junior doctors in hospitals, is an example of a Network Mentoring model. Harvard Graduate School of Education described Instructional Rounds as a program "adapted to education from the field of medicine and embodied a specific set of ideas about how practitioners can work together to solve common problems and improve their practice" (Retrieved from <http://www.gse.harvard.edu/ppe/programs/prek-12/portfolio/instructional-rounds.html>). An Instructional Round consists of a junior doctor, or team of junior doctors, shadowing a senior doctor as they investigate patient needs/progress, by the patient's bedside. Applied to the classroom, City, Elmore, Fiarmon and Teitel (2009) described an Instructional Round as a relationship between student, teacher and content, stating,



In its simplest terms, the instructional core is composed of the teacher and the student in the presence of content...a focus on the instructional core grounds school improvement in the actual interactions between teachers, students, and content in the classroom... (pp. 22-3).

In follow-up research, City (2011) discovered that, “Inevitably, rounds bring to the surface areas of need that can inform professional development” (p. 39). From this observation she concluded that “Rounds are not about “fixing” individual teachers. Rounds are about understanding what's happening in classrooms...For rounds to accelerate improvement, educators need a protocol for taking next steps that they've committed to on their own” (p. 37).

Instructional Rounds as a mentoring strategy is one approach that may meet the needs of ongoing professional development in a school. The benefit of this type of engagement include peer interaction; in-situ observation; an emphasis on mutuality and being freed from the stigma of being “fixed”.

In summary, educators can learn much about mentoring from other professions. With reference to the three professions considered, educators must realise that:

1. dedicated programs must attract appropriate funding;
2. staff time may need to be protected by outsourcing some mentoring tasks;
3. mentors need on-going support;
4. umbrella organization oversight keeps any program accountable.
5. equal and reciprocal status applies to mentors and mentees;
6. mutuality is at the heart of any mentoring program;
7. those who self-refer as mentors do so on a voluntary basis;
8. peer interaction is a good way of providing inter-mentee support;
9. in-situ observation is possibly the most authentic form of mentoring;
10. mentees must be freed from the stigma of seeing themselves as being “fixed”.

This section identified several models of mentoring that may be transferable into the educational setting. These included the traditional, reverse, peer, network, and hybrid models. It was found that mentoring, regardless of profession, shared characteristics in terms of conceptual understanding.

### **The Mentoring Pathway for a Graduate teacher in Western Australia**

In Western Australia, an undergraduate degree in primary education currently entails four years of coursework including teaching practice. The practical work involves practice supervision by a mentoring teacher and a selected university supervisor. After successful completion of their final practice and all coursework units, a then graduate teacher is ready to apply for entry into the work force. A graduate has several options to pursue in seeking employment and these include working for schools in the Department of Education Western Australia (DEWA), The Association of Independent Schools Western Australia (AISWA) and The Catholic Education Office of Western Australia (CEOWA).

A brief comparison of mentoring programs offered by DEWA and CEO schools has been included for the purpose of this study. A graduate entering a DEWA school has to participate in four modules of the Graduate Teacher Professional Learning Program over their first two years of teaching. This training also satisfies professional learning requirements for teacher registration in Western Australia, which up until the formation of the Teacher Registration Board of Western Australia (TRBWA) in 2013, was governed by The Western Australian College of Teaching (WACOT) (Department of Education Western Australia, 2011). Each DEWA school principal is also allocated an allowance through a school grant to support its graduate teachers through assistance with relief funding and purchasing curriculum materials. In their first year of teaching in a DEWA school, graduates are allocated an additional 2.5 days per year to attend professional development and receive an extra allowance of up to \$1600 per annum to assist with personal and professional costs

associated with establishing their career in the first two years of teaching (Department of Education Western Australia, 2011).

In comparison, the Catholic Education Office (CEO) in Western Australia is in the process of constructing a mentoring framework. From 2010-2012 the CEO had begun workshops for Beginning Teachers called The Beginning Teachers' Network Meeting. This project originated from the work in one school, conducted by an assistant principal, who was commissioned by the CEO to run the program as part of the Teacher Quality National Partnership Program. This was then incorporated into a system-wide approach. Workshops were conducted each semester and are open to teachers in their first three years of teaching as well as to new teachers to the Catholic system (S. Mayne, CEO personal communication, July 16th, 2012). The purpose of these workshops was to enable participants to share experiences and ask questions in a supportive learning environment. The CEO partly covers relief-teaching costs to free up the Beginning Teacher to attend these sessions. Boreen, Johnson, Niday and Potts (2009) emphasized the importance of supporting programs being offered by a central education office, such as the Catholic Education Office, and did so for the following reasons,

...District-based mentoring programs for Beginning Teachers often include 'one-shot' workshops that focus on particular strategies or practices...But most of these in-services overlook the individual needs of Beginning Teachers. ...Because they work closely with Beginning Teachers, mentors can better determine individual needs and develop specific plans to meet those needs. This is not to suggest that generic district – or – school-sponsored workshops cannot be useful; many are very productive. But not every Beginning Teacher will benefit from these activities, and it is important to blend district or school objectives with the Beginning Teacher needs and professional development goals (p. 144).

Significantly, at one of the Beginning Teachers' Network meetings in 2010, when asked whether or not they had a mentor, only one out of ten Beginning Teachers said they had a mentor present at their school (G.Piccardi, CEO Beginning Teachers' Network

Meeting, personal communication, August 27<sup>th</sup>, 2010). This study plans to investigate whether this indeed is a true reflection of the overall mentoring experiences of Beginning Teachers, following the introduction of a new Beginning Teacher Program trial at the Catholic Education Office of Western Australia in 2013. Furthermore, the study will discuss the implications for developing a school-based mentoring framework within the Catholic Education system. In this researcher's experience, there have been no specific selection criteria or training provided for the selection of mentors in Catholic schools in Western Australia. This is because there is no formal mentoring program requirement in place at the school level and as yet no official mentoring framework has been established for schools to follow.

This section has provided information relating to the various ways in which new teachers can access mentoring opportunities in Western Australia. It was shown that different systems offer different experiences; some systems seem to be more advanced than others in terms of what is being offered; and that both system-wide and local mentor programs can add value, depending on how they are rolled out.

### **Beginning Teachers in Catholic Schools and their extra responsibility for teaching Religious Education**

Not all teachers employed by the Catholic education system in Western Australia are Catholics. However, a professing Catholic primary educator also has the added expectation, even as a graduate, of teaching a ninth learning area, that of Religious Education. This is unlike their state teacher graduate counterparts who are responsible for teaching in eight learning areas only. Currently, there is no one standard approach to the teaching of Religious Education in Australian Catholic schools. In this regard, Grojczonek and Ryan (2014) observed that,

Each Australian diocese has its own curriculum, although in some states the Archdiocesan religious education guidelines are used by other diocese in that

state... Prospective or beginning religion teachers are required to implement diocesan religion guidelines and all planning for the classroom religion program must begin with the authorised curriculum. (p. 150).

A Catholic educator, when planning a Religious Education program, faces similar issues as planning in any other subject area in the curriculum, with one important exception as noted by Grojczonek and Ryan (2014),

The classroom religion program also considers the religious life of the wider school and parish communities as well as relevant aspects about learners. However, a further aspect of the latter consideration peculiar to the classroom religion program is students' diverse and pluralistic religious backgrounds. The classroom religion program cannot be planned with the premise that all students are Catholic and are regular members of the local parish community (p. 146).

This statement is of importance for Beginning Teachers in the teaching of Religious Education. How the Beginning Teacher accurately transfers the teachings of the Catholic Church through their own pedagogical style, their knowledge and practice of faith, will impact how a child learns important knowledge about the Catholic faith. A 2004 Western Australian study by Saker into first and second pre-service teachers perceptions of their University Religious Education classes found that only one per cent of enrolled students undertaking a course preparing them to teach in a Catholic school, believed that attending Mass was obligatory for a Catholic (Saker, 2004; Saker, 2006). It is not surprising then, that one of Saker's main conclusions from his study was that the Religious Education curriculum in Western Australia favoured an experiential approach to teaching morality at the expense of official church teachings. This has led, in Saker's understanding, to deficits in how Church teaching has been interpreted by students who weren't aware of aspects such as obligation to attend Mass and the Church's position on contraception (Saker, 2006).

As Saker's research had noted, the explicit moral teachings of the Catholic Church had not been implemented as well as expected in The Perth Archdiocesan Religious Education Units of Work, originally released in 1997. From the experience of this researcher,

many of the Units of Work since 1997 have neither been updated to cater for important changes relating to new popes and saints, updated Papal Encyclicals, and importantly Religious Education pedagogy – such as research in teaching Religious Education in the Early Years of children and teaching Religious Education through the use of information technology.

As cited in relevant Church documents (Gravissimum Educationis, 1965; The Catholic School, 1977 & The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium, 1997), the role of parents is still of fundamental importance to the development of a child's faith in a Catholic School and sole responsibility should not rest solely with the school or teacher. This was affirmed by Bishop O'Kelly of Port Pirie at the 2011 National Catholic Education Commission (NCEC) Conference in Adelaide when he said, "Faith is nurtured in the family, supported by the school and proclaimed in the parish... This child only passes our school once, the mission is based on Jesus and this is why the school was founded" (unpublished, researcher's notes from the conference). Bishop O'Kelly's address highlighted an important issue for Beginning Teachers in Catholic education. Unless Catholic teachers practice their own faith, are supported in their teaching of Religious Education and develop a thorough understanding of the teachings of the Catholic Church, then their potential influence on a child's knowledge and faith development will likely be minimal.

Apart from the support of a child's parents, their principal, and fellow staff that a Beginning Teacher might receive with regard to Religious Education, the input of a knowledgeable and trained mentor is likely to be a key in providing consistent and ongoing support. The present research demonstrates the growing importance of mentoring in forming the necessary dispositions needed for the next generation of beginning Catholic Teachers in Western Australia.

This section has indicated that in a Catholic school, professing Catholic teachers are responsible for providing instruction in Religious Education. It was shown that mentoring might be one way in which official Church teaching could be disseminated to novice teachers to ensure that correct and appropriate knowledge-based and affective curricula is transmitted to children.

### **Teacher Dispositions and their meaning for Effective Mentoring in Catholic Education.**

Murrell, Diez, Feiman-Nemser and Schlusser (2010) defined teacher dispositions as, "... habits of professional actions or moral commitments that spur such actions. In effect, dispositions refer to a teacher stance, a way of orienting oneself to the work and responsibilities of teachers" (p. 9). With regard to Beginning Teachers in Catholic schools, key teacher dispositions could be facilitated through a school-based mentoring program. Such a program would need to take into account contextual factors and mentor training aimed specifically at dispositional imperatives (Dinham, 2008; Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, Victoria, 2014). Husbands and Pearce (2012) observed that when this occurs, "The very best teaching arises when this research base is supplemented by a personal passion for what is to be taught and for the aspirations of learners" (p. 12). In the past, Harris (1991) also made reference to the unique connection between dispositions in relation to a vocation in Catholic education, stating, "Redemption, salvation, acting as prophets – these are religious terms...we teachers, at our best, can shape and reshape subject matter in order to present, to institute, and to constitute what is, has been, and might be humanly possible" (p. 4). Dinham (2008) observed that those teachers who had positive "teacher personal qualities, relationships with students, demonstrated ongoing professional development and a range of planning resources and strategies were more likely to engage

student learning” (p. 25). Given such exigencies, a significant role for a leader would be choosing a suitable mentor for a Beginning Teacher.

One major pre-requisite for choosing a mentor is selecting a person who espouses appropriate dispositions and strong vocation to teach. Murrell, Diez, Feiman-Nemser and Schlusser (2010) highlighted how some 29 American Universities were successfully implementing professional dispositions into their teacher training programs. They also described how pre-service education students were taught about recognising their own moral perspective dispositions. Their research might provide valuable insights for implementing professional development courses for pre-service and Beginning Teachers in Catholic Education (pp. 5-6). Murrell, Diez, Feiman-Nemser and Schlusser (2010) argue that such an approach would prepare Beginning Teachers through the support of a mentor, to reflect on morality-based issues such as: what the individual as a professional ought to do (moral action); and what the individual chooses to do (ethical agency).

For Beginning Teachers, reflecting on important professional moral questions could be undertaken with the help of a trained mentor. Such reflection is an important skill in Beginning Teacher development because, “In order to learn from experience it is invariably necessary to take account of the emotional component of the experience” (Mortiboys, 2013, p. 151). Concomitantly, school leaders might be assisted in further developing their own emotional competence through participation in a mentor training program, as highlighted by Swann, Peacock Hart and Drummond (2012). These researchers identified seven key dispositions for facilitating such development,

1. Openness: not a belief that there is one right way of doing things and that outcomes are predictable;
2. Questioning: not relying on certainties and ready-made solutions;
3. Inventiveness: not compliance with imposed models and materials;



4. Persistence: not setting for easy answers and rejecting complexities;
5. Emotional stability: not a fear of failure or fear of trying new things;
6. Generosity: not deficit or negative thinking and a desire for uniformity; and
7. Empathy: not a fear or defensiveness where there is a culture of blame (pp. 87-88).

The opportunity to enhance the mentoring experience through the development of training opportunities that incorporate these dispositional skills may likewise benefit Beginning Teachers and mentors at both the school and system level.

As this study has been undertaken in Western Australia, justification for the establishment of mentoring framework in Catholic Schools in Western Australia can be found in a speech by Saint (formerly Pope) John Paul II. This speech formed part of the official opening of the Catholic Education Centre in Perth, Western Australia in 1986. Although lengthy, it is considered important to include a substantial part of the address in order to maintain contextual integrity,

...In the midst of these different currents of the modern world, Catholic education seeks to be faithful to its religious dimension. Catholic education is called upon to develop the gift of faith. It aims at bringing into the fullness of the Christian life those who have been baptized. It seeks to foster a desire to worship God in spirit and in truth, and a longing to share more completely in the life of the Most Holy Trinity. In today's world, we must help young people and adults to have a clear and consistent understanding of the faith, so that they will be able to affirm their Christian and Catholic identity. Only then will they be able to bear joyful witness to Christ in the changing times in which we live. Education must also assist the members of the Church to grow in an appreciation of their human vocation, since all are called to help make the world a better place. If people possess truly human values and sound moral principles, they will be enabled to find "solutions which are truly human" for the problems of their lives. Christians know that their faith helps them to contribute more effectively to the good of the society in which they live (John Paul II, 1986).

The above statement presents a significant challenge to all teachers, leaders and administrators in Catholic schools. It also has implications for Catholic education as a whole, which is supported, in Western Australia, via the mandate of the Catholic Education Office. One way of addressing St John Paul's II challenge may be the establishment of a robust system of mentor selection and training and the development of an integrated mentoring framework for all novice teachers.

Saint John Paul II discussed the importance of maintaining a Catholic faith dimension in education. As this faith was founded from within a strong historic tradition of Catholic Education in Western Australia, and as such development was in many ways premised on providing some form of mentoring to novices, it seems appropriate to provide a summary of the early history of how this was undertaken. Such an approach also emphasizes how mentoring has historic tenure in this State.

This section investigated the nature of teacher disposition and found that dispositional attributes can be either an advantage or a hindrance in rolling out a mentoring framework. It was concluded that careful mentor selection, perhaps by disposition, might obviate problems at a later date. Special mention was made of school leaders who need to be what may be called "dispositionally disposed" with regard to supporting a mentoring framework if it is to prove successful. The next section briefly reflects on those early Western Australian Catholic educators who showed a devotional disposition to the task to which they committed themselves.

### **Early History of Mentoring in Catholic Education in Western Australia.**

Throughout the history of Christianity, mentoring has been a concept evident through the missionary role of educators in the Catholic Church. Mentoring has been demonstrated in sacred Scripture through the life of Jesus and his relationship with the Apostles, in the everyday lives of the saints, and in the formation of religious orders. English (1999)

described Jesus' model of ministry as one of collaboration and support of group cohesion, stating,

Just as Jesus called the twelve and began to send them out two by two (Mk 6:7), so too ought Catholic school teachers be sent out in twos... Those who do not realize and assume their responsibility to be available to and mentor new teachers should be reminded of Jesus' example and of the positive rewards of being a mentor (p. 401).

The missionary role of Catholic Education in Western Australia was established with the arrival of Bishop Brady and The Irish Sisters of Mercy in 1846, (Retrieved from [http://www.perthcatholic.org.au/Our\\_Archdiocese-History.htm](http://www.perthcatholic.org.au/Our_Archdiocese-History.htm) ). As a result of the large number of religious orders teaching in Catholic Education at this time, the early role of lay teachers was somewhat forgotten.

A book by O'Reilly (1901), however, does provide a rare glimpse into the early mentoring experiences of one lay teacher, Mary Lucille, in a Catholic school around 1850. Mary Lucille, ought to be acknowledged as one of the first lay Catholic teachers informally mentored among the many religious teachers in early Western Australia education. From the early account of Mary Lucille, O'Reilly made it evident that many Beginning Teachers in the 1840s to 1870s were not given any teacher training in Western Australia; at best, only informal mentoring was provided. As Western Australia developed in the 1880s and early 1890's due to the growth of country towns in the wheat-belt and the Gold-rush in Kalgoorlie, O'Reilly acknowledged the role of the Religious in spreading Catholic education, He stated, "These sisters very soon after being settled in Perth, opened schools for primary and higher education. These institutions were well patronized and were justly regarded as boons to the whole community" (O'Reilly, 1901, p. 25). It may be appropriately inferred from O'Reilly's book that informal inter-staff mentoring was probably what kept the system afloat. O'Reilly also identified a further issue,

To keep pace with the constant demand for schools on the goldfields is a serious problem, but the Bishop is satisfactorily solving it by locating communities of Sisters in various rising townships to meet the educational requirements of the people (p. 393).

Similar problems are faced by today's principals, but who, without communities of religious orders to call upon, now have difficulty staffing schools with lay teachers in rural areas.

When lay teachers are available, they often do not possess the requisite qualities required by the system, or have been absent from teaching for an extended period of time.

For many years, this role of mentoring Beginning Teachers in Catholic schools fell to the Religious Orders, who were given the responsibility to train and mentor new teachers. Up until the late 1970's and early 1980's, many teaching and leadership positions in Catholic schools in Western Australia were filled by priests and Religious orders of Sisters and Brothers (Treston, 2008). Whereas in the past, parents relied on Religious Orders and a few lay teachers to teach all learning areas including Religious Education, today the majority of Beginning Teachers in Catholic schools are lay teachers. The decline of the Religious Orders over the last thirty years or so in Catholic education has created a tremendous loss of mentoring experience in key areas of leadership, teaching and faith education (Sharkey, 2010; Treston, 2008).

The increased need for the selection and training of quality mentors and leaders in Catholic schools has never been a more relevant issue than at the present time. However, budgetary constraints may make this difficult. With threats of cuts in federal funding to private schools being mooted, some Catholic Schools could suffer, thereby placing even more downward pressure for funding to support mentoring programs (Bye & McDougall, 2017).

This section has revealed that mentoring in Catholic education in Western Australia has been around for a considerable period of time. In its embryonic phase, it was informal in nature and supported mainly by Sisters and Brothers belonging to the various teaching orders.

In the next section attention is given to how, as time passed, greater formality, informed by research, became more of a norm in the establishment of mentoring programs.

### **The Current State of Mentoring in Catholic Schools in Western Australia.**

The Beginning Teachers' Network Meetings, described earlier, were replaced with a trial mentoring program in 2013 for 36 Beginning Teachers, involving 20 city and 15 country teachers from schools in the Perth Diocese (which included Kalgoorlie). This program was called The Early Career Teachers Program, and included a mixture of ECE/Primary and Secondary teachers. The trial was expanded to include all Beginning Teachers in Catholic Schools in 2014. Each of the four Catholic Dioceses in Western Australia – Perth, Geraldton, Broome and Bunbury – are included in the program (Table 2.2).

Table 2.2

#### *Diocesan participation in 2014 Catholic Schools Program*

Diocese	Participants
Perth (+ Kalgoorlie)	102 (+ 8)
Geraldton	20
Broome	10
Bunbury	31
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>171</b>

(Mrs. G. Wynne, CEO personal correspondence: 31<sup>st</sup> March 2014)

Although the program ceased at the end of 2016, as a consequence of a broader program review, it is evident that mentoring provided during the program was, at least in part, intended to address attrition in the workforce,

Through participation in the professional learning workshops, there are opportunities for Early Career Teachers to conduct personal reflections on their strengths and areas for growth in their teaching. The program objective is to assist graduate teachers to transition into the profession and keep them in it. (Catholic Education Circular, 2013, p. 22).

The importance of establishing system-based support and a mentoring framework has been recognised in the United States. In a research report titled *The cost of teacher turnover in five school districts: A pilot study*, Barnes, Crowe and Schaefer (2007), who prepared the report, identified the financial cost of losing a new teacher. The study found that, “The total cost of turnover in the Chicago Public Schools is estimated to be over \$86 million per year. It is clear that thousands of dollars walk out the door each time a teacher leaves” (Barnes, Crowe & Schaefer, 2007, p. 5). Similarly, the Catholic Education Office of Western Australia’s Trial Beginning Teacher program which began in 2013 had by the commencement of 2014 lost only two of the original 36 participants. Indeed, “the approximate cost of \$4,500 *per participant* invested by the Catholic Education Office and their schools has already proven a worthwhile investment for the future” (Mrs. G. Wynne, CEO personal correspondence, 31<sup>st</sup> March 2014). Such data supports the argument for the developing systemic mentoring framework which might help stem the flow of teacher hemorrhage.

Brennan (2013), with regard to Catholic education in Australia, argued that mentoring development ought to come from within each school’s own setting, stating, “Induction processes need to be differentiated to maximise their impact upon staff and the future directions of an organization” (p. 94). Within this paradigm, Whitaker and Fiore (2013) alerted organisations to the importance of mentor selection and screening, arguing that leaders, “must make sure that new teachers get the most effective mentors possible and that the mentors receive appropriate training. These critical components of a mentor program dramatically escalate the possibilities of success” (p. 108).

This section showed how Catholic education is currently in a state of flux regarding how mentoring is to be envisaged, but it was also noted that various attempts have been made and are currently being made to formalize how mentoring is to be approached to include all

Beginning Teachers. In summary, discussion revolved around the need for mentor-related programs to be cognizant of the advantages of system-wide input; the need for school-tailored nuancing; the inverse relationship between mentoring and workforce attrition; and the benefits of selecting appropriate mentors. As the leaders are the linchpin in any program, their importance in mentoring is discussed in what follows.

### **The Importance of Leadership in Mentoring.**

Principals as leaders have a significant role to play in the promotion of mentoring within a school's culture. Sergiovanni (1984) defined school culture as "the collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one school from another", which includes "values, symbols, beliefs, and shared meanings of parents, students, teachers, and others conceived as a group or community" (pp. 11-12). With regard to a beginning employee in any organization, Pendleton and Furnham (2012) stated that, "Good leadership is inextricably linked with the internal quality of the organisation (its culture and climate), which is then closely associated with staff satisfaction and loyalty" (p. 32). It is likely that any prospective employee will see an offer of mentoring as beneficial to professional development and thereby career progression.

On behalf of the Australian Council of Educational Research Douglas and Harris (2008) undertook a case studies in six Victorian schools and found that for successful schools, "Building relationships is seen as important and worthwhile activity in each case study school" and that "The schools use supportive approaches to assist their staff in this, such as working in teams, peer observation, coaching and mentoring" (pp. 47-51). In a large study which included one urban and five rural sites, eight principals, 74 teachers, 17 mentor teachers and 18 community representatives, Johnsen, Haensly, Ryser and Ford (2002) addressed the changes needed to train teachers effectively to differentiate curricula for gifted students in the general classroom. They highlighted how significant factors such as mentoring

and strong leadership influenced these changes. They reported that, “All of the teachers rated the mentors as beneficial to extremely beneficial... although those resisting more transformational changes were still a vocal group in some project schools where poor leadership was present” (p. 16).

Depending on the leadership style of a principal, there are going to be unique factors particular to a school’s culture that influence the establishment of a mentoring program in a school. For example, synthesising the work undertaken by the Department of Education Massachusetts Guidelines for Induction (2001); Johnsen, Haensly, Ryser and Ford (2002); Hayes and Noonan (2008); Hudson (2010b); Freeman-Loftis (2011); and Jensen and Reichel, (2011), it has been argued that considerations by a school leader of the following factors could influence the quality of mentoring that occurs in a school:

- a. the location, financial resources and size of the school;
- b. time allocated for mentor and mentee to discuss teaching;
- c. the role of leadership in selecting mentors about the learning needs of the students in the school;
- d. the role of Professional Learning Communities/ Staff Meetings and how they are used to improve teaching and learning through mentoring; and
- e. the importance placed on mentoring as a transformational tool to improve professional feedback for the teacher with the goal of enhanced student learning.

Passmore, Peterson and Freire (2012) further noted the important role that leaders play in specifically addressing these five key factors in the mentoring process. They outlined the importance of involving senior management leaders and other stakeholders; clarifying the program’s purpose; matching mentors and mentees; providing supervision and support for mentors; identifying different stages in mentor development; and finally, reviewing and evaluating progress.



In summary, this section identified the importance of the leader or leadership team in facilitating an effective mentoring program. Five factors that require promotion by leaders in order for any program to be sustained were identified. Having examined the role of leadership in mentoring, the next section extends this by looking specifically at leaders in Catholic schools.

### **Leadership and mentoring in Catholic Schools in Western Australia.**

According to Radford (2009) the principals and leadership team's role in a Catholic school is fundamental in overseeing the mentoring of a Beginning Teacher and ought to be seen as part of any Induction Process. The 2015 Enterprise Bargaining Agreement (EBA) between teachers covered by either the CEO or the Independent Education Union Western Australia (IEUWA), saw principals as being key in any induction process, stating, "A teacher in his or her first year of teaching shall participate in an induction process of one year's duration." Envisaging the principal as a de facto employer, the document further stated, "The employer shall provide a written statement to the teacher one term before the end of the teacher's first year, outlining the teacher's progress and development" (CEOWA, 2015, Section 27, p. 37). It is reasonable to suggest that a well established mentoring framework would go a long way in helping novice teachers successfully complete the induction process.

Catholic principals have the added responsibility, compared to a State school counterparts, of not only selecting good mentors for their Beginning Teachers (AITSL, 2011a), but also ones who fulfill the extra role of being an informed role-model who can teach Religious Education. The stipulation of the teaching role of the Catholic school has been mentioned in numerous Vatican II documents since 1962 (such as *Catechesi Tradendae*, (1979); *The Catholic School*, (1977); *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, (1975)). More specifically, Catholic Canon Law, which comprises of the body of laws and regulations made by or

adopted by ecclesiastical authority, for the government of the Catholic Church and its members, It states,

Can. 803:2 The instruction and education in a Catholic school must be grounded in the principles of Catholic doctrine; teachers are to be outstanding in correct doctrine and integrity of life...

Can. 804.1. The Catholic religious instruction and education which are imparted in any schools ...are subject to the authority of the Church...

Can. 804. 2. The local ordinary is to be concerned that those who are designated teachers of religious instruction in schools, even in non-Catholic ones, are outstanding in correct doctrine, the witness of a Christian life, and teaching skill (Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1998).

The principal's role is crucial in ensuring that Canon Law stipulations are effectively executed. It seems obvious that an effective mentoring program, as part of any induction process (and possibly beyond) might go a long way to addressing the imperatives of this injunction. In establishing such a program, Whitaker and Fiore (2013) identified the role of the Principal is imperative, stating, "In the final analysis the Principal has responsibility for building strong mentors. When mentoring programs fail, they fail because principals don't realize their own responsibility for making them work" (pp. 141-2).

Accordingly, the study explores whether principals are providing significant support to Beginning Teachers. As Adoniou (2013) argued, "Providing this kind of support can be a challenge for school leaders who are so busy implementing the latest barrage of mandates. They often forget the educator they themselves wanted to be let alone find the time to ask the question of their Early Career Teachers" (p. 19). This having been said, it still remains the responsibility of the principal, together with their leadership team, to provide adequate induction for newly appointed teachers.

This section has highlighted the importance of mentoring in how it relates to the overall induction that principals are required to provide new teachers. Such a requirement finds its genesis in Canon Law and related Church documents.

## **Chapter Summary.**

This chapter presented a synthesis of the literature that undergirds the present study. It began by identifying the international, national and local research undertaken on mentoring within various systems of education. It then moved to exploring the benefits that a robust mentoring system provides and presented possible models of how mentoring might be managed. The chapter was concluded by presenting mentoring-related information relevant to Catholic education in Western Australia.

It has been shown that mentoring can positively assist the overall teaching experience of pre-service and Beginning Teachers as well as provide the mentor and mentee with valuable life and career skills. This study focuses on ascertaining what lessons can be learnt from the mentoring experience and how this learning can then be applied to the development of an effective mentoring framework in a Catholic school.

The next chapter describes the methodology undertaken in each of the three phases of this study through the eyes of Post-Internship (Pre-Service) teachers, Beginning Teachers and principals. Data was interpreted using a mixed methods convergence design. This involved three distinct yet inter-related phases that explored the mentoring experience. These phases were then synthesised to provide a clearer picture of mentoring in the Catholic Education system.

## CHAPTER 3

### RESEARCH DESIGN

#### Introduction

As the present study aimed to gain more than a mere understanding of the mentoring of Beginning Teachers from the perspective of what might be called “commonsense realism”, an epistemology was considered in conjunction with the formulation of the research questions. The chapter begins with an identification of where the study is located epistemologically. As Moss (2010) indicated, “Research in the field of induction and mentoring with a few exceptions is theoretically impoverished and is dominated by what Law described as ‘commonsense realism’” (p. 51). The chapter then moves to describing the three phases of the study; examining the research methodology; and giving attention to aspects of method. The chapter culminates with consideration being given to matters of trustworthiness and consistency, and reference being made to compliance with ethical standards.

#### Epistemology

The epistemological position of the study is thus grounded in the belief that in order to generate a truly comprehensive outcome, scientifically generated data ought to be complimented by phenomenologically derived data, as both approaches together, through such strategies as survey data and focus group interviews, play an important role in better understanding reality. Burns (1995) recognised this potential when he wrote, “Quantitative and qualitative methods may appear to be opposites derived from different philosophies, yet both are legitimate tools of research and can supplement each other” (p. 241).

Positivist epistemology can be used effectively to interpret large data sets of varied populations using cross-sectional and/or longitudinal techniques (Creswell & Plano Clark,

2011). Results may then be generalisable to broader populations on the basis of investigations with a randomised sample. The advantage of using a positivist orientation is that complementary instruments capture broadly-based information; however, in-depth data for more fine-grained interpretations are difficult to access. A phenomenological approach, on the other hand, allows the researcher to delve deeper into the ontological significance of a particular encounter. Rather than data being captured, phenomena are investigated.

The Heideggerian approach to phenomenology, as described by Cole (2010), has a distinct ontological focus on “one being in the world, and being in the world with others” (p. 1). This approach became an important consideration in the present study as the intention was to develop an understanding of in-depth personal experience. The focus then, is similar to that identified by McNally and Blake (2012), who found in their description of how an Early Career Teacher formed their professional identity that, “as the evidence unfolded and yielded new understandings...we became aware of our implicit closeness to a Heideggerian phenomenology” (p. 199). In this regard, the study espouses a pragmatic orientation in that it is problem-centred and based in real-world experiences (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011).

As both a quantitative and qualitative approach was seen to be desirable for the current study, it was decided to use mixed-method methodology while at the same time referring broadly to grounded theory. Both of these approaches are discussed in what follows.

## **Methodology**

### **Mixed methods.**

In the view of Creswell and Plano Clark (2007), the basic premise of mixed methods research is that, “...the use of quantitative and qualitative approaches in combination,

provides a better understanding of research problems than either approach alone” (p. 8). Concomitantly, Greene (2008) stated that mixed methods research “promotes pragmatism as its philosophical champion” (p. 8). Thayer, (1968, as cited in Crotty, 1998) suggested that, “For the pragmatist, therefore, meaning has reference, if sometimes only remotely so, to the ordinary situations and conditions in which actions occur” (p. 73). Saldaña (2012) had a similar view stating, “I myself take a pragmatic stance toward human inquiry and leave myself open to choosing the right tool for the right job... The more well versed you are in the field’s eclectic methods of investigation, the better your ability to understand the diverse patterns and complex meanings of social life” (p. 2). As the present research desired to obtain broad spectrum as well in-depth information as it applied to mentoring, and as a pragmatic approach was seen as best addressing the research questions, a determination was made to utilise a mixed method approach.

For the purpose of this study, collection and interpretation of the data involved a mixed methods convergence design. Following Creswell and Plano Clark (2007), these combined methods (QUAN + QUAL) form a specialized mixed methods convergent model (Figure 3:1). Such a strategy involves separate collection and analysis of results from survey questionnaire (QUAN) and focus group interview data (QUAL). The data findings are then subjected to convergence for the purpose of contrast and comparison. Interpretation involves analysing the information from these findings in order to answer the Research Questions.

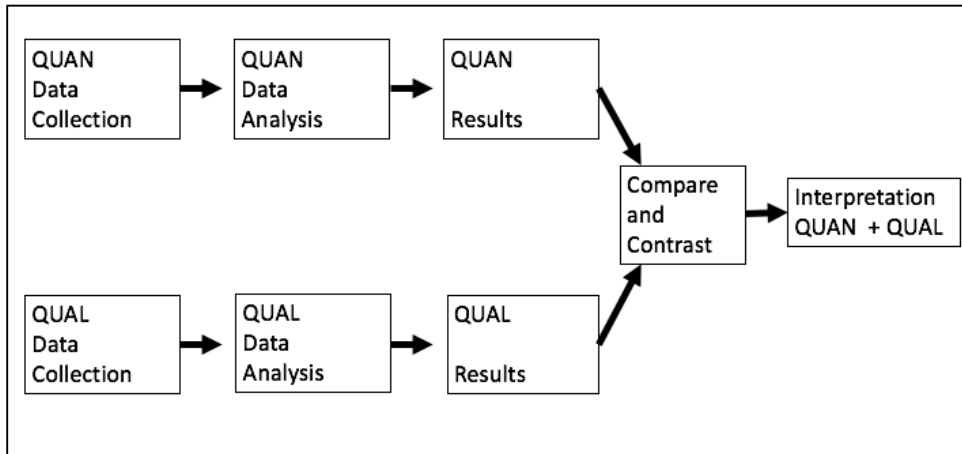


Figure 3.1. Mixed methods triangulation design: Convergence model (After Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007, p. 64).

### **Theoretical framework.**

It was also considered that grounded theory, anchored in inductive methodology would make a valuable contribution to the study. As Strauss and Corbin (1998) proffered, “grounded theories, because they are drawn from data, are likely to offer insight, enhance understanding, and provide a meaningful guide to action” (p. 12). Grounded theory has been defined as, “a theory grounded in the data rather than based on some a priori constructed ideas, notions, or system” (Wiersma, 1995). As the study relied on the emergence of conceptual categories, it was considered that the research procedures of grounded theory might be advantageous in organizing and categorizing concepts as they emerged. It has been suggested that even if no theory emerges, grounded theory research “will still retain its descriptive value” (Wiersma, 1995, p. 13).

Based on the discussion thus far, Figure 3.2 presents the theoretical framework for the research. The figure indicates how the study is integrated theoretically; it begins with the preferred epistemological perspective, moves to considering research exigencies and concludes with an interpretation of the data.

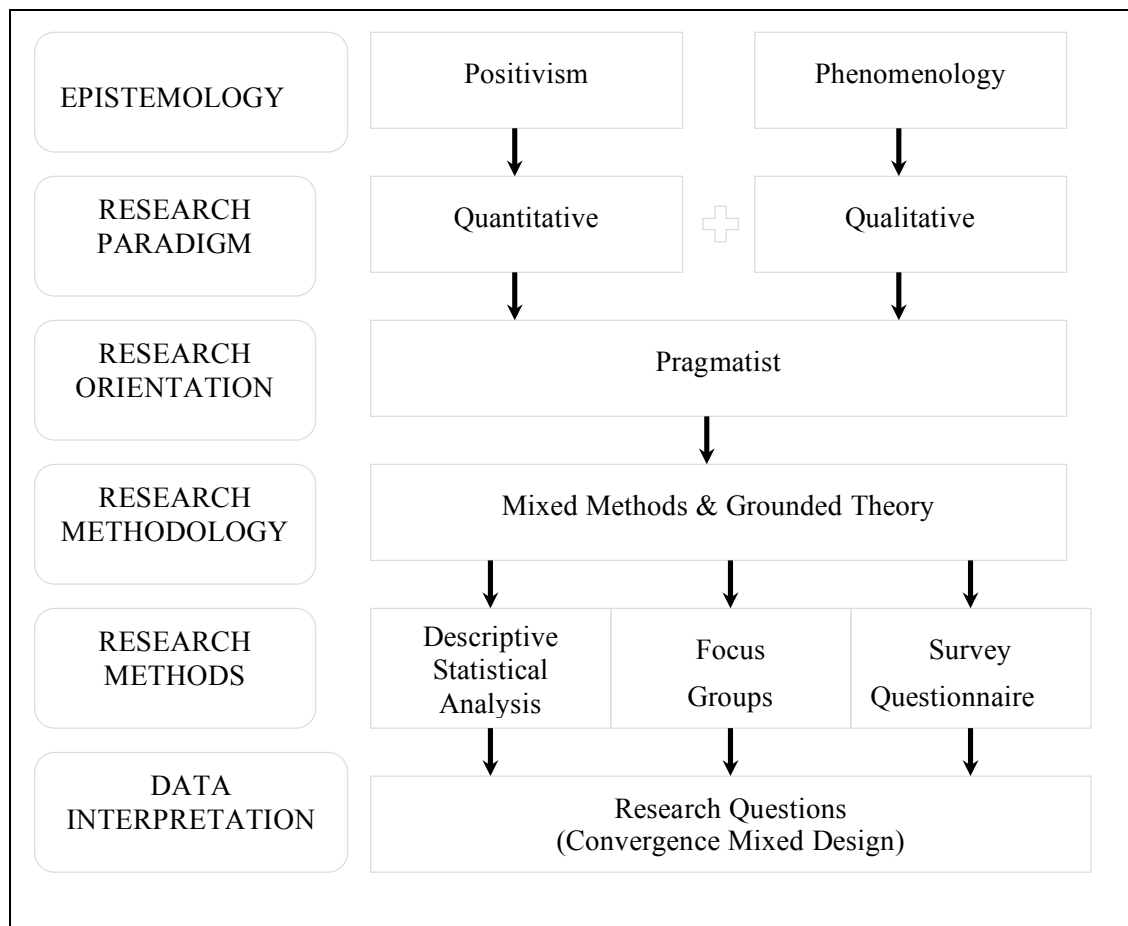


Figure 3.2. Theoretical framework for the study.

## Methods

What follows is a linear description of how the study was undertaken. The various components under this methods rubric are identified and described in the remainder of the chapter.

### **Extraction of descriptive categories for planning a mentoring framework.**

As identified in the review of the literature, there exists a vast corpus of research on models of mentoring and mentoring programs. The value of grounded theory procedures became immediately apparent in helping to extract, from the literature, relevant concepts pertaining to the creation of a mentoring framework, that could then be tested in the “real world” of the study environment. As Corbin and Strauss (1990) stated, “As in other



qualitative approaches, the data for a grounded theory perspective can come from various sources. The data collection procedures involve interviews and observations as well as such other sources as government documents, video tapes, newspapers, letters, and books – anything that may shed light on questions under study” (p. 5). Strauss and Corbin (1998) referred to this approach as conceptualising the phenomena, which resulted in the creation of a defined set of attributes or concept descriptors. Strauss and Corbin (1998) argued that, “The purpose behind naming phenomena is to enable researchers to group similar events, happenings, and objects under a common heading or classification” (p. 103). What Corbin and Strauss termed attributes or concepts have in the present research been identified as *theme descriptors* (from here on referred to as *descriptors*). This nomenclature was chosen as it more accurately represents the data under consideration.

The first step in the research was to identify descriptors that needed to be considered before a mentoring framework could be planned. After a thorough investigation of the literature, descriptors relating to the creation of a mentoring framework were extracted for the present study (Table 3.1). Where similar descriptors were identified across studies, these were synthesised to into a representative statement. The 18 descriptors that were extracted could then be used to provide the basis for the mentoring framework.

Table 3.1

*Theme Descriptors Related to Developing a Framework for Effective Mentoring as Identified in the Literature*

Identifier	Descriptor	Characteristic
1	Personal Expectations	Of own teaching and mentoring
2	Parental Expectations	As experienced by novice teachers
3	Staff Expectations	Others' expectations of novice teachers
4	Principal and Leadership Expectations	Of Beginning Teachers, system & mentors
5	University Expectations and Training	As experienced by Beginning Teachers
6	Catholic Education Expectations	System expectations of graduate teachers
7	State Expectations	Relating to teacher registration
8	National Expectations	As articulated through national standards
9	School/Parish Interactions	Regard for Catholic community
10	Mentor Characteristics and assistance	Selection and training of mentors
11	City vis-à-vis Country Issues	Geographic and demographic differences
12	Professional Development Programs	Availability and quality
13	Mentoring Programs and Experiences	experiences of a mentoring program
14	Group Aspirations re mentoring	All Beginning Teachers in a school
15	Personal Aspirations re mentoring	Graduates, novice teachers and leaders
16	Emotions during Mentoring experience	Beginning teacher emotions re mentoring
17	Leadership Mentor Training	Availability and quality
18	Mentoring Opportunities	Opportunities for peer learning

### **Conceptual Framework and Research Questions**

Having identified from the literature the descriptors required for the development of a mentoring framework, these now needed to be tested to determine their veracity in the Western Australian Catholic educational context. Such a task was undertaken with three different groups which represented three discrete (by cohort) yet interrelated (by orientation) phases of the study. Prior to doing so, the research questions presented earlier are re-

presented here for ease of reference. Figure 3.3 then shows how these relate to the conceptual framework for the study.

*Primary Overarching Research Question:*

To what extent is early career mentoring operating effectively in Catholic school environments in Western Australia.

*Subsidiary Questions:*

- 1) Does participation in a mentoring program for Early Career Teachers affect their career aspirations?
- 2) What perceptions do CUWA Post-Internship (Pre-Service) teachers hold regarding mentoring prior to the commencement of their teaching career?
- 3) How have graduate teacher perceptions of mentoring changed as a result of having been teaching for three school terms?
- 4) What perceptions regarding mentoring do new graduates hold at the commencement of their teaching career?
- 5) What perceptions do principals have of how mentoring is conceived of in a Catholic School?

*Integrative Question:*

On the basis of Questions 1-5, what are considered to be the key principles that underpin the development of a Pre-Service and Beginning Teacher mentoring framework?

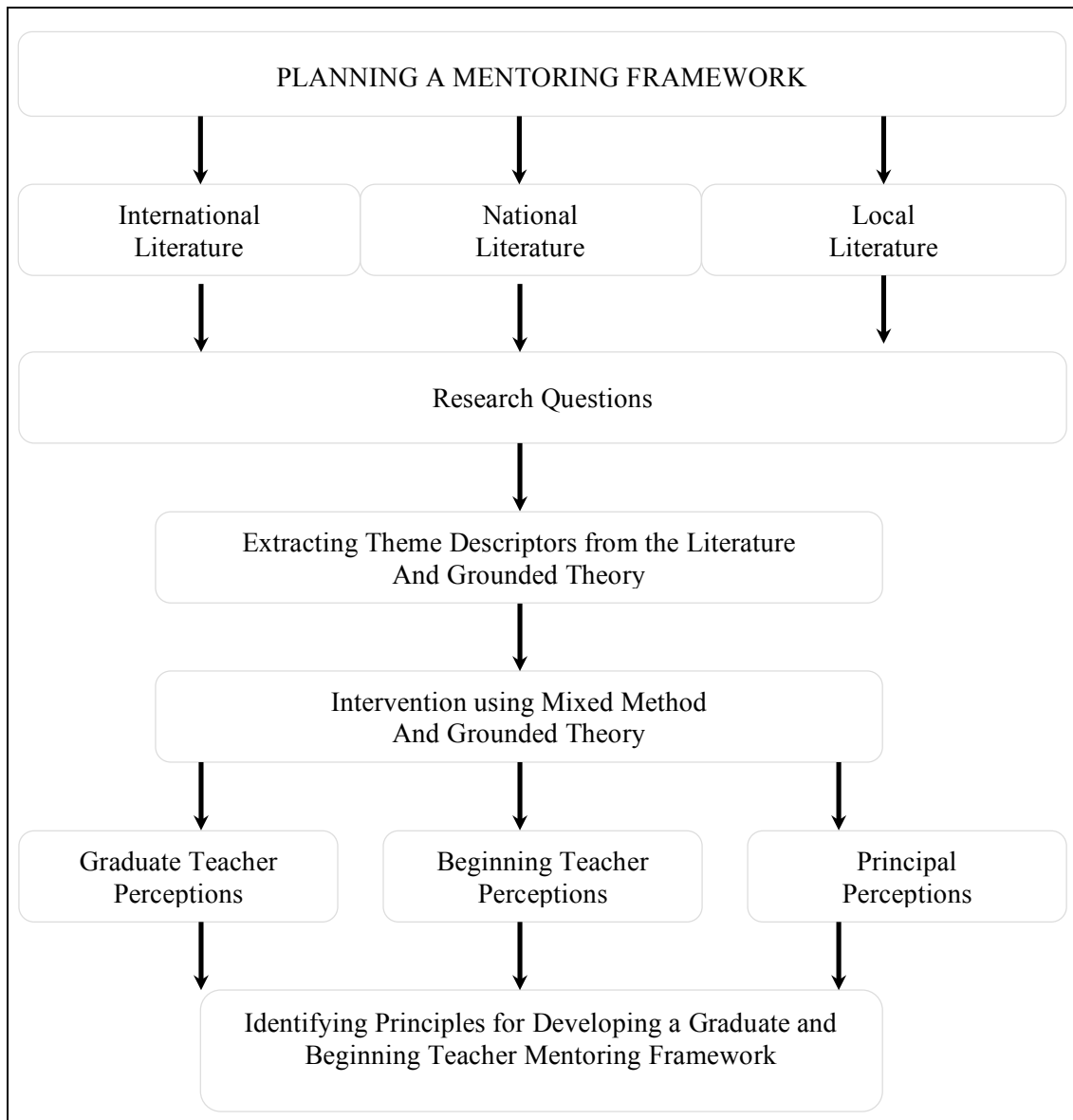


Figure 3.3. Conceptual Framework

### **Phases of the Study, Participant Selection, Instrument Selection.**

It was decided to collect data separately for each group phase as this would assist discrete interpretation prior to the data being converged and interpreted as a whole. The phases, as described in the Research Conceptual Framework (Figure 3.3) are:

1) Phase One (Cohort One) consisted of obtaining survey and focus group interview data ECE/Primary/ Secondary students from a Catholic University in Western Australia (CUWA) who had recently completed their 10 week Internship;

2) Phase Two (Cohort Two) consisted in total of 32 Catholic primary principals and one secondary principal who completed a survey and were engaged in a focus group interview.

3) Phase Three (Cohort Three) involved 36 beginning city and country teachers chosen as part of the trial of The Early Career Teachers Program in Catholic schools (described in Chapter 2) which had been initiated by the Catholic Education Office of Western Australia (CEOWA). As for principals, this group also completed a survey and were engaged in a focus group interview.

Survey questionnaires and focus group interview were selected as the instruments best suited gain the perspectives and experiences of participants during each of the three phases of this study, and so address the research questions. Survey questionnaires were selected because they sought to seek the perceptions of the mentoring experience through utilising a range of question techniques, which included multiple choice, Likert scales and open short answer written responses. The importance of web-based surveys to collect data was identified by Rosenbaum and Lidz (2007). They recommended that Dillman, Tortora and Bowker's (1999) more traditional survey methods are a useful guide for designing web-based surveys. The advantages of on-line survey questionnaires are further described by Roztoki and Morgan (2002) as providing "Lower costs; wider distribution; automated data entry and

faster turnaround times” (p. 1). The surveys gathered simple statistical data about the mentoring experiences of Post-Internship (Pre-Service) teachers, Beginning Teachers and principals. In total, there were four survey questionnaires using the web-based Survey Monkey program (Rosenbaum & Lidz, 2007) and one non-web based paper self-reflection questionnaire. As the participant population was reasonably socio-economically homogeneous, and all participants had equal access to computer technology, it was considered that Survey Monkey would be the most efficient way to collect data from Post-Internship (Pre-Service) teachers, Beginning Teachers and principals.

The purpose of the focus group interviews was to gain a range of perceptions of the mentoring experiences of Post-Internship (Pre-Service) teachers, Beginning Teachers and principals. Focus group interviews were chosen because they present an opportunity to collect data on group interaction about the topic of mentoring by taping and then transcribing the responses for later detailed analysis. Focus Group interviews also require greater attention on the part of the moderator to gather greater depth from a participant compared to an individual interview (Morgan, 1997). In a focus group participants can spark off each other and so deliver deeper information that might otherwise be unavailable to the researcher. Data was collected in non-threatening and comfortable forums, with all participants appearing relaxed and keen to participate.

What follows is a description of each phase of the study. Prior to that though, a summary of the research plan is presented to provide an overview of the research phases; participant numbers in each phase; and data gathering locations, collection methods, relevant dates (Table 3.2).

Table 3.2

*Research Details*

<i>Data Collection Group</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Setting</i>	<i>Location</i>
<b>Phase 1: CUWA – Post-Internship Perceptions</b>				
1a) CUWA Post-Internship Teachers Survey (QUAN)	13	4/11/12	School of Education, CUWA	Fremantle, 20 km from Perth <sup>1</sup>
1b) CUWA Graduate Teachers Focus Group (QUAL)	5	26/11/12	St Therese Library CUWA	Fremantle, 20 km from Perth
1c) CUWA Focus Group follow-up Survey	5	7/9/13	Home/school	Web-based
<b>Phase 2: Principal Perceptions</b>				
2a) CEO Principals Survey (QUAN)	32	19/1/13	Home/school	Web-based
2b) CEO Principals Focus Group (QUAL)	16	6/8/13	CEO Doubleview IT Hub	Doubleview, 8 km from Perth
3a) City CEO Combined Beginning Teachers Survey (QUAL)	20	6/3/13	CEO James Nestor Hall	Leederville, 5.5 Km from Perth
<b>Phase 3: Beginning Teacher Perceptions</b>				
3b) City CEO Beginning Teachers Focus Group (QUAN)	20	6/3/13	CEO James Nestor Hall	Leederville, 5.5 km from Perth
3a) Country CEO Beginning Teachers Survey (QUAL)	12	13/4/13	St Joseph’s School Library	Boulder, 596 km from Perth
3b) Country CEO Combined Beginning Teachers Focus Group (QUAN)	12	13/4/13	St Joseph’s School Library	Boulder, 596 km from Perth
4a) Written Self-reflection Questionnaire June – September Combined Primary/Secondary City	20	7/6/13 21/8/13	CEO Doubleview IT Hub	Doubleview, 8 km from Perth
4b) Written Self-reflection Questionnaire June – September Combined Primary/Secondary Country	12	14/6/13 7/9/13	St Joseph’s School Library	Boulder, 596 km from Perth
5a) CEO Beginning Teachers-Primary City Survey	11	21/8/13	CEO Doubleview IT Hub	Doubleview, 8 km from Perth
5b) CEO Beginning Teachers-Secondary City Survey	9	21/8/13	CEO Doubleview IT Hub	Doubleview, 8 km from Perth

5c) CEO Beginning Teachers- Primary City Focus Group	11	21/8/13	CEO Doubleview IT Hub	Doubleview, 8 km from Perth
5d) CEO Beginning Teachers- Secondary City Focus Group	9	21/8/13	CEO Doubleview IT Hub	Doubleview, 8 km from Perth
5a) CEO Beginning Teachers- Primary Country Survey	4	7/9/13	St Joseph's School Library	Boulder, 596 km from Perth
5b) CEO Beginning Teachers- Country Secondary City Survey	9	7/9/13	St Joseph's School Library	Boulder, 596 km from Perth
5c) CEO Beginning Teachers- Primary Country Focus Group	4	7/9/13	St Joseph's School Library	Boulder, 596 km from Perth
5d) CEO Beginning Teachers- Secondary Country Focus Group	9	7/9/13	St Joseph's School Library	Boulder, 596 km from Perth

<sup>1</sup> Perth is the capital city of Western Australia

### **Phase 1: A Catholic university in Western Australia.**

The first phase of the study involved the Post-Internship (Pre-Service) education student group perceptions from a Catholic University in Western Australia (CUWA). The CUWA was chosen for this study as it was the only Catholic University in Western Australia and as such, many graduates from this University would end up teaching in Catholic schools. Participants were purposefully selected and invited to join the study if they were a 2012 Post-Internship (Pre-Service) teachers. The reason for collecting data from this group was to gain their perceptions of mentoring and discover any aspirations they held regarding mentoring since completing their Internship.

After obtaining permission from the Dean of Education (Appendix A) and Ethical clearance from the CUWA (Appendix B), data collection commenced with a briefing of education students at their final lecture. Some 80 ECE/Primary and Secondary graduate students who were present at the final lecture were briefed regarding the study and invited to participate. During the briefing, Post-Internship (Pre-Service) teachers were provided with an information sheet that explained the study and a consent form. Those willing to participate were instructed to complete a survey questionnaire using Survey Monkey (Rosenbaum & Lidz, 2007).



The survey was to be completed electronically from a link provided to the students on the information sheet provided. Disappointingly, only 13 students completed the survey. These represented ECE (n = 2 ) and Primary (n = 11) students (Appendix G). The survey was completed anonymously.

After completion of the survey, participants were asked if they wished to be involved in one follow-up focus group interview (Appendix H). Those who agreed were invited to reveal their contact details. Only five participants (ECE = 1; Prim = 4) indicated interest in attending the focus group and were subsequently contacted. Unfortunately, one of the five students could not attend the focus group meeting. This student however agreed to answer the focus group interview questions within a day of the focus group meeting and return the completed questionnaire by email, which the student did. Focus group data for all five participants was then transcribed using voice recognition software (Aleahmad, 2012). Debriefing for the focus group involved member checking, a qualitative strategy used in Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis to ensure trustworthiness and data quality (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009, p. 213). Such a step was taken to verify that the researcher's representation of events, behaviours and phenomena had been correctly portrayed.

The same five participants from the focus group were contacted by email in the following year (September, 2013), and invited to complete a follow-up survey (Appendix L) after having been engaged in three terms of teaching. The purpose of this survey was to determine how their perceptions of mentoring had changed in the intervening year. This survey was again web driven with a link being provided to participants. The survey was the same survey as completed by The Early Career Teacher Program participants in August/September (Appendix L).

## **Phase 2: Catholic Primary Principals' Perceptions.**

The second phase of the study involved Catholic Primary Principals' perceptions of mentoring Beginning Teachers in Catholic Schools in Western Australia. Participants were purposefully selected in that the criteria used involved utilising the current principal directory, sourced from the Catholic Education Office (CEO, 2012). All principals from either a city or country Catholic school in Western Australia were deemed eligible. Prior to collecting data, permission to approach principals was sought from and granted by the President of the Catholic Primary Principals Association (CPPA; Appendix C), who received both a copy of the survey instruments and an information sheet. The two instruments used to gather data from principals – a web-based survey (Appendix I) and one focus group interview – presented in Appendix J.

Over a two week period in January and February 2013, all principals were invited to complete the survey questionnaire and leave their details if they were interested in participating in a follow-up focus group interview. Principal data for both the survey group and focus group are provided in Table 3.3. The survey period was January/February 2013 and data was collected through a provided email link to Survey Monkey. Principals were provided with both an information sheet and an informed consent form for signing and returning. The focus group interview for principals was held in August 2013, at the Doubleview campus of Catholic Education Office. It was fortuitous that principals were already scheduled to meet at this venue with the Executive Director of Catholic Education. In arranging the focus group interview after this meeting, participation was maximized. Some principals travelled vast distances and represented both country and city locations throughout Western Australia. Two principals, who volunteered to participate in the focus group interview but who could not attend the meeting, emailed their responses for the focus group questions. Accordingly, their data was included in the research.

Mention needs to be made of the fact that one secondary principal, due to his interest in and involvement with the trial of The Early Career Teachers Program, also wanted to be included in the focus group interview. Although the intent of the research was on the ECE/Primary sector of Catholic education, it was felt that including this principal's data might provide interesting insights. It would also have been considered disrespectful to have either discouraged the principal's participation or accepted and then disregarded it. Further, as far composite schools are concerned (Table 3.3), these include secondary representation.

Table 3.3

*Principal Participation Data*

Principal	Total (N)	Survey (n)	Country (n)	City (n)	Focus Group (n)
Composite <sup>1</sup>	22	0	0	0	0
Primary	112	32	5	10	15
Secondary	27	0	1	0	1
TOTAL	161	32	6	10	16

<sup>1</sup> Composite = Primary/Secondary

**Phase 3: Beginning Teacher Perceptions.**

The third and final phase of the study involved the perceptions of Beginning Teachers in Catholic Schools in Western Australia. Participants were purposefully selected through involvement in the trial of The Early Career Teachers Program. The selection of participants was co-ordinated by the CEOWA. All participants from the Program agreed to take part in the present study.

Permission to access all participants in the trial of The Early Career Teachers Program had previously been granted by the Executive Director of the Catholic Education Office in Western Australia in December 2012 (Appendix D). In January 2013, a meeting was initiated

by the researcher to meet with the coordinator of the trial of The Early Career Teachers Program at the Catholic Education Office of Western Australia. This meeting was necessary to ensure that data collection could be administered at appropriate junctures during the city and country meetings of trial The Early Career Teachers Program. The dates for each of The Early Career Teachers Program days is presented in Table 3.4.

Table 3.4

*CEOWA Trial Beginning Teaching Meeting Dates and Participation 2013*

<i>Location: City</i>	<i>Location: Country (Boulder)</i>	<i>Primary Beginning Teachers (city+country)</i>	<i>Secondary Beginning Teachers (city+country)</i>	<i>TOTAL</i>
March 6	April 13	15	15	30
June 7	June 14	15	17	32
August 21	September 7	15	17	32

The trial of The Early Career Teachers Program, consisted of three meeting dates conducted over a six-month period in 2013. This trial consisted of a total of 36 participants forming a combined City and Country beginning teacher cohort. The city locations were under 12 km from the city centre of Perth, Western Australia. In comparison, the country location for this study was hosted in Boulder, 596 km east of Perth, Western Australia. The need for collecting data from two separate locations was in consideration of the long travel distances, relief teaching expenses, and travel costs for a Beginning Teacher to travel to the city from a location in rural Western Australia.

The three instruments used to gather data about the mentoring experiences of the Beginning Teachers were two web-based survey questionnaires (Appendix K & L), six focus group sessions (Appendix M & N) and one non-web based paper Self-Reflection questionnaire (Appendix O). Information sheets were presented at the beginning of The Early

Career Teachers Program meetings and informed consent sought. The consent forms were signed before the beginning of data collection. The web-based surveys were completed in computer laboratories using computers or I-Pads. Participants were given access to the web-based survey by typing in a link that was provided on the Information sheet.

During meeting one, in the city in March 2013, survey and focus group instruments gathered data on the mentoring experiences of the beginning primary and secondary teachers from their term one experiences of teaching. For future meetings, in an attempt to enhance focus group interaction, it was decided to divide the focus groups according to their primary or secondary orientation. During meeting two, in the country in April 2013, the second web-based survey and focus group interview for Beginning Teachers was conducted. Details are provided in Table 3.4.

During meeting three, in the city in June 2013, and meeting 4 in the country in June 2013, a written self-reflection questionnaire (Appendix O) was administered to participants to determine whether perceptions of mentoring had changed by the end of term two. During meeting five, in the city in August 2013, and meeting six in the country in September 2013, the written self-reflection questionnaire (Appendix O) was also re-administered to participants. This questionnaire was designed for Beginning Teachers to reflect on their experiences of mentoring by the end of term three. The non-web based paper self-reflection questionnaire was anonymous with each participant being randomly assigned a city or country code by the researcher at the top of their survey document (Appendix O). This code was only known to the researcher and each participant. Interpretations from this non-web based paper self-reflection questionnaire are elaborated in the Findings chapter.

Debriefing for all six Beginning Teacher focus groups in March/April and August/September involved transcribing verbal protocols and engaging in member checking. Participants were also thanked for their involvement.

## **Risks and threats**

It has been noted in the literature (Brink, 1993) that the greatest risks and threats to research come in the form of validity and reliability (for quantitative research) or credibility and confirmability respectively (for qualitative research), the latter being the preferred terms in the present research. Credibility and confirmability were enhanced through the parallel mixed methods analysis technique. This enabled the survey and focus group design using a quantitative and qualitative matrix to be converged. As Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009) proffered, “Parallel MM [mixed methods] designs permit researchers to triangulate results from the separate QUAN and QUAL components of their research, thereby allowing them to “confirm, cross-validate or corroborate findings within a single study” (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009, p. 187). Miles and Humberman (1984) and Burns (1995), termed this process triangulation which verifies, “the consistency of findings generated by different data-collection methods; and checking out the consistency of different data sources within the same method” (p. 273). Adopting triangulation methods in the present study helped safeguard against credibility and confirmability transgressions.

Morgan (1997) described how focus group interviews add to the creation of future creation of items. In place of trialling the survey, the first focus group (CUWA, Post-Internship {Pre-Service} teachers) played the added role of refining the survey on the basis of feedback. This group can be considered a quasi trial group as it was small in number and limited in scope in the sense that the bulk of future analysis was undertaken on graduate and principal data. Member checking was utilised to ensure the accuracy of data. As identified by Kasprzyk (2005), such a safeguard allows participant responses to be clarified by the researcher. Designing a semi-structured script for each focus group interview (H, J, M & N) also enabled the researcher to follow questions in a consistent order.

For the design of a web-based survey, Dillman, Tortora and Bowker (1999) identified four potential sources of error, namely, “Coverage error, sampling error, measurement error and nonresponse error” (p. 2). Coverage error was minimised through the author obtaining an updated list of all participants’ e-mail addresses as recommended by Lodico, Spaulding and Voegtie (2006). Sampling error in the distribution of surveys was lessened through purposive sampling in each phase of the study. Kasprzyk (2005) stated the importance of planning to reduce measurement error from occurring. During the design of surveys and focus groups, factors were recognised that may have affected the confirmability of the data. Such factors, which were considered in structuring the web-based instrument, relate to, “Test takers’ personal characteristics; variations in test setting; variations in the administration and scoring of the test; variation in participant responses due to guessing...” (Lodico, Spaulding & Voegtie, 2006, p. 89). Planning for Non-response error involved each survey being designed on an excel document before being exported to the Survey Monkey program (Appendix G, I, K & L). Arranging survey items this way ensured that appropriate protocols could be established in the Survey Monkey survey program settings prior to the distribution of the surveys. This also ensured participants with incomplete answers would be reminded of this fact prior to progressing to the next question.

Even though the researcher was responsible for gathering data via surveys and focus group interviews, care was taken to ensure that a dual and unequal relationship was avoided. At no time were any of the participants in the employ of the researcher. None of the participants had a direct relationship to the researcher and as such neither were they placed in a professionally or personally compromising situation. All information was collected on a voluntary basis and participants could withdraw from the research at any time.

## **Data Analysis Procedure**

A separate analysis of QUAN (survey) + QUAL (focus group) data for each phase of the study was undertaken. The mixed methods analysis involved the identification of the descriptors from the literature and plotted the current qualitative and quantitative data against these. This was achieved by using a simple tick or cross to represent whether or not the descriptor was evident (Table 4.2; 4.3 in the following chapter). The focus groups' and surveys' ticks were then converged and an overall percentage of the achievement of that descriptor was identified (Table 4.4 in the following chapter). The results combined to inform mixed method analysis in order to answer the research questions.

### **Quantitative data analysis (survey questionnaire).**

Descriptive statistical analysis was undertaken on the four web-based surveys and the one non-web-based survey. Data sets were analyzed using the Survey Monkey and Excel analytical tools and results are presented in the following chapter. The data for analysis consisted of survey data from Post-Internship (Pre-Service) teachers, Beginning Teachers and principals. Finally, the findings of the analysis of the converged quantitative and qualitative data were used to determine the common precepts necessary to assist the development of school-based mentoring framework for graduate and Beginning Teachers in Catholic schools. These findings are discussed in the following chapter.

### **Qualitative data analysis (focus group interviews).**

The qualitative data collected for each of the focus groups undertaken in the study was digitally tape-recorded using the researcher's iPad and iPhone. The researcher, using the Transcriba software program (Aleahmad, 2012) then transcribed the data. This program allowed for data to be typed onto a word document from the focus group recording as



recommended by Aleahmad (2012). The initial process of analysis as described by Smith and Osborn (2008) was adopted as a guide for transcription,

The transcript is read a number of times ... It is important to read and reread the transcript closely in order to become as familiar as possible with the account...Some parts of the interview will be richer than others and so warrant more commentary. Some of the comments are attempts at summarizing or paraphrasing, some will be associations or connections that come to mind, and others maybe preliminary interpretations (p. 67).

As per the procedure advocated by Smith and Osborn (2008) and Saldaña (2012), the initial notes were used to interpret “meaning to each individual datum for later purposes of pattern detection, categorization, theory building, and other analytic processes” (Saldaña, 2012, p. 3). The overall aim was to identify descriptor themes that surfaced in the focus group data. Burns (1995) further stated: “Coding is not something one does to get data ready for analysis but something that drives ongoing data collection. It is in short a form of continuing analysis” (p. 290). In light of this understanding, repeated reference was made to the data to ensure that the data had been interpreted accurately. As indicated previously, in order to verify semantic accuracy, member checking was undertaken.

Driscoll, Appiah-Yeboah, Salib and Rupert (2007) stated that when analysing mixed methods data, “One of the more common strategies counts the number of times a qualitative code occurs. Some qualitative data analysis software programs (such as Atlas or NVivo) can generate these reports” (p. 22). For this particular study a mixed method software program called Dedoose (Leiber, 2009) was used to construct a matrix count. Dedoose allowed data to be entered and counted alongside the corresponding descriptor. The descriptors were those originally identified from the literature review. It was found that data from the focus group interviews conveniently matched the eighteen descriptors that had been identified from the literature. Had this not been the case, further descriptors would have been generated and

added to the matrix. The resulting matrix that was constructed is discussed as part of the Findings for this study.

### **Limitations**

As an exploratory study that utilized purposive sampling, it was not the intent of this work to cater for aspects such as gender bias or sample size. Neither was it intended for results to be generalized to different populations. The proposed framework presented in chapter five may have applicability for systems outside of Catholic education, but such a proposition would require further investigation.

### **Ethical considerations**

Ethics approval was granted to access the participants for all three phases. This consisted of gaining permission from: The CUWA (Appendix B); The Catholic Primary Principals Association of Western Australia (Appendix C); and The Catholic Education Office of Western Australia (Appendix D). The participants were provided an Information Sheet (Appendix E) and an informed active consent form (Appendix F) to sign prior to participating in the research. For on-line surveys, consent was requested on the opening page of the survey and participants could not progress until consent had been established. These were all in accordance with the ethical protocols set out by each of the three participating stakeholders involved in each phase of this study. Participants were advised that they could withdraw from the project at any time. No identifying information was used and the results from the study will be made freely available to all participants. To protect the privacy of participants, a code was ascribed to each of the participants to minimise the risk of identification data collected will be stored securely in a locked cabinet for five years.

## **Chapter Summary**

This chapter has presented the research design for the study. The epistemology was firstly expounded followed by the methodology, which was identified as mixed method and grounded theory. The various aspects of the method were then presented, which included the process of extracting theme descriptors; theoretical and conceptual frameworks; participant selection; risks and threats to the research; and data analysis procedures. The chapter concluded with a brief discussion of study limitations and ethics protocols.

The next chapter describes how Post-Internship (Pre-Service) teacher, Beginning Teacher, and principal data were interpreted, using an QUAN + QUAL which is then converged to enable mixed method analysis. Findings are then interpreted and used to inform the creation a mentoring framework.

**CHAPTER 4**  
**ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS OF**  
**SUBSIDIARY RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

**Introduction**

To this point, the nature of the research has been introduced, relevant literature identified, and the research design presented. For convenience, Table 4.1 summarises what has been introduced in the previous chapter. In the present chapter, data is analysed and findings considered for answering the five subsidiary questions identified earlier. Data pertains to that collected on CUWA Post-Internship (Pre-Service) teachers, principal and Beginning Teacher participants. After extraction and data convergence procedure have been discussed, the remainder of the chapter considers findings that answer each subsidiary question in turn.

Table 4.1

*Phases of the Study and Location of Data for answering Research Questions*

Research Questions	Study Phases and Relationship to Research Questions
<i>Primary overarching research question:</i>	
To what extent is early career mentoring operating effectively in Catholic school environments in Western Australia.	<p><i>Phases of study:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Phase One consisted in total of 13 Post-Internship), ECE/primary/secondary students from the CUWA;</li> <li>2) Phase Two consisted in total of 32 Catholic primary principals and one secondary principal; and</li> <li>3) Phase Three involved 37 beginning city and country teachers chosen as part of the trial Beginning Teacher Program in Catholic schools.</li> </ol>
<i>Subsidiary questions:</i>	
1) Does participation in a mentoring program for Early Career Teachers affect their career aspirations?	<i>Relationship of phase to research question:</i> CUWA Phase One, and ECT Beginning Teachers Phase Three.
2) What perceptions do CUWA Post-Internship (Pre-Service) teachers hold regarding mentoring prior to the commencement of their teaching career?	CUWA Phase One.
3) How have graduate teacher perceptions of mentoring changed as a result of having been teaching for three school terms?	CUWA Phase One focus group interviews participant survey, and ECT Beginning Teacher Phase Three focus group interviews and survey data.
4) What perceptions regarding mentoring do new graduates hold at the commencement of their teaching career?	ECT Phase Three Beginning Teacher survey and focus group interviews data.
5) What perceptions do principals have of how mentoring is conceived of in a Catholic School?	CEOWA Phase Two principal focus group interviews and Survey data.
<i>Integrative question:</i>	
On the basis of Questions 1-5, what are considered the key principles that underpin the development of a pre-service and Beginning Teacher mentoring framework?	Key findings are presented from Phases One, Two and Three.

**Extraction and Convergence of Concept/Theme Descriptors**

Eighteen key theme descriptors (from here on simply termed descriptors), previously identified from the literature review, were matched against participant responses to determine degree of relationship between what is reported in the mentoring literature and what surfaced

from the data. It was found that the research data neatly fitted the 18 descriptors that had previously been identified in the mentoring literature. Progressing from Table 4.1, phase findings are now considered to determine how mentoring is being perceived within the context of Catholic education.

Initially, analysis was undertaken separately on both the Quantitative (QUAN) and Qualitative (QUAL) data. The analysis of QUAN data was undertaken via Survey Monkey and QUAL data via Dedoose software. Where a descriptor was identified at a particular study phase, consisting in total of five surveys and eight focus group interviews, this was represented by a tick/check (✓). The results are presented in Table 4.2 for QUAN data and Table 4.3 for QUAL data. The analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data was further supported using the data obtained from a self-reflection questionnaire (Appendix O) that explored the Beginning Teacher relationships after three terms of teaching, with their mentor and students and how they felt about their teaching. Responses were tallied, graphed (Figures 4.7; 4.8; 4.10; 4.11; 4.12 & 4.13) and used for the purpose of triangulation with the QUAL data. Results are discussed in what follow.

Table 4.2

*QUAN Survey Descriptors and their Identification in each Phase of the Study (from Dedoose)*

Quantitative Survey Group Phases	Concept/Theme descriptor								
	1. Personal Expectations	2. Parental Expectations	3. Staff Expectations	4. Principal & Leadership Expectations	5. University Expectations & Training	6. Catholic Education Expectations	7. State Expectations	8. National Expectations	9. School/ Parish Interactions
<b>Phase 1</b> CUWA Pre-service Teachers' Group First Survey, November. (n=13)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓
<b>Phase 2</b> Combined City/Country First ECT Beginning Teachers' Primary and Secondary Groups, March/April. (n=30)	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	X	✓	X
<b>Phase 2</b> Combined City/Country Second CEO Beginning Teachers' Primary and Secondary Groups, August/September.(n=32)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X
<b>Phase 1</b> CUWA Pre-service Teachers' Group, Follow-up Beginning Teachers' Survey August/September. (n=5)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X
<b>Phase 3</b> CEOWA PRINCIPAL Group, August. (n=32)	✓	X	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	X
<b>TOTAL (/5)</b>	5	4	5	5	3	5	3	5	1
Quantitative Survey Group Phases	Concept/Theme descriptor								
	10. Mentor Characteristics	11. City vis-à-vis Country	12. Professional Development Programs	13. Mentoring Programs	14. Group Aspirations re mentoring	15. Personal Aspirations re mentoring	16. Emotions during Mentoring	17. Leadership Mentor Training	18. Mentoring Opportunities
<b>Phase 1</b> CUWA Pre-service Teachers' Group First Survey, November. (n=13)	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	X	✓
<b>Phase 2</b> Combined City/Country First CEO Beginning Teachers' Primary and Secondary Groups, March/April. (n=30)	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>Phase 2</b> Combined City/Country Second CEO Beginning Teachers' Primary and Secondary Groups, August/September.(n=32)	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>Phase 1</b> CUWA Pre-service Teachers' Group, Follow-up Beginning Teachers' Survey August/September. (n=5)	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓
<b>Phase 3</b> CEOWA principal Group, August.(n=32)	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	X
<b>TOTAL (/5)</b>	5	3	4	5	3	4	5	4	4

Note. The cross (X) refers to a descriptor not being evident and the check/tick (✓) refers to a descriptor being evident in the Survey phases.

Table 4.3

*QUAL Focus Group Interview Descriptors and their Identification in each Phase of the Study (from Dedoose)*

Qualitative Focus Group Phases	Concept/Theme descriptor								
	1. Personal Expectations	2. Parental Expectations	3. Staff Expectations	4. Principal & Leadership Expectations	5. University Expectations & Training	6. Catholic Education Expectations	7. State Expectations	8. National Expectations	9. School/ Parish Interactions
<b>Phase 1</b> CUWA Pre-service Teachers', November. (n=5)	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	X	✓	✓
<b>Phase 2</b> City CEO Beginning Teachers' Combined Primary and Secondary Group, March. (n=20)	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	X
<b>Phase 2</b> Country CEO Beginning Teachers' Combined Primary and Secondary Group, April. (n=12)	✓	X	X	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>Phase 2</b> City CEO Beginning Teachers' Primary Group, August. (n=11)	✓	X	X	✓	X	✓	X	✓	X
<b>Phase 2</b> City CEO Beginning Teachers' Secondary Group, August. (n=9)	✓	✓	X	✓	X	X	X	X	X
<b>Phase 3</b> CEO PRINCIPAL Group, August. (n=16)	✓	X	X	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓
<b>Phase 2</b> Country CEO Beginning Teachers' Primary Group, September. (n=4)	✓	X	✓	✓	X	X	X	X	X
<b>Phase 2</b> Country CEO Beginning Teacher's Secondary Group, September.(n=9)	✓	✓	✓	X	X	X	X	X	✓
<b>TOTAL (/8)</b>	8	4	4	6	2	5	2	5	4



Table 4.3 Cont'd

Qualitative Focus Group Phases	Concept/Theme descriptor								
	10. Mentor Characteristics & assistance	11. City vis-à-vis Country Issues	12. Professional Development Programs	13. Mentoring Programs	14. Group Aspirations re mentoring	15. Personal Aspirations re mentoring	16. Emotions during Mentoring experience	17. Leadership Mentor Training	18. Mentoring Opportunities
<b>Phase 1</b> CUWA Pre-service Teachers', November. (n=5)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓
<b>Phase 2</b> City CEO Beginning Teachers' Combined Primary and Secondary Group, March. (n=20)	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	X
<b>Phase 2</b> Country CEO Beginning Teachers' Combined Primary and Secondary Group, April. (n=12)	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓
<b>Phase 2</b> City CEO Beginning Teachers' Primary Group, August. (n=11)	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓
<b>Phase 2</b> City CEO Beginning Teachers' Secondary Group, August. (n=9)	✓	X	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	X
<b>Phase 3</b> CEO PRINCIPAL Group, August. (n=16)	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>Phase 2</b> Country CEO Beginning Teachers' Primary Group, September. (n=4)	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>Phase 2</b> Country CEO Beginning Teachers' Secondary Group, September. (n=9)	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>TOTAL (/8)</b>	8	4	4	8	8	6	8	3	6

*Note.* The cross (X) refers to a descriptor not being evident and the check/tick (✓) refers to a descriptor being evident in the Focus Group interview phases.

The next step was the adoption of a mixed methods approach to compare, contrast and converge the QUAN + QUAL data. Once tallied, the total number of ticks from the focus group interviews and surveys was converged to provide a score out of 13 which was then converted to a percentage. The convergence of data for the entire study is presented in Table 4.4. The individual breakdown of this convergence of data for each of the three phases

subsequently occurs in: Tables 4.10 (CUWA converged data); 4.13 (ECT converged data) and 4.17 (principal converged data). The descriptors that appeared throughout all QUAL + QUAN phases of the study are presented in Table 4.5. The frequency of these descriptors across cohorts suggests that they should be ranked as being most significant when the development of a mentoring framework is considered. As such, they are considered in greater detail in the following chapter when the Borromeo mentoring framework is introduced.

Table 4.4

*QUAN + QUAL Percentage Tally of Converged Descriptors*

Concept/Theme descriptor									
QUAN + QUAL Phases	1. Personal Expectations	2. Parental Expectations	3. Staff Expectations	4. Principal & Leadership Expectations	5. University Expectations	6. Catholic Education Expectations	7. State Expectations	8. National Expectations	9. School/ Parish Interactions
Note <sup>1</sup> Quantitative Descriptor Total- ( / 5)	5	4	4	6	2	5	5	5	1 <sup>1</sup>
Note <sup>2</sup> Qualitative Descriptor Total ( / 8)	8	4	5	5	3	5	3	5	4 <sup>2</sup>
Note <sup>3</sup> QUAN <sup>1</sup> + QUAL <sup>2</sup> TOTAL ( /13)	13	8	9	11	5	10	5	10	5 <sup>3</sup>
Note 4. TOTAL ( % ) <sup>4</sup>	100	61.5	69.2	84.6	38.5	76.9	38.5	76.9	38.5 % <sup>4</sup>

Concept/Theme descriptor									
QUAN + QUAL Phases	10. Mentor Characteristics	11. City vis-à-vis Country	12. Professional Development Programs	13. Mentoring Programs	14. Group Aspirations re mentoring	15. Personal Aspirations re mentoring	16. Emotions during the mentoring experience	17. Leadership Mentor Training	18. Mentoring opportunities & Interactions
Note <sup>1</sup> Quantitative Descriptor Total- ( / 5)	5	4	3	5	3	5	5	4	4 <sup>1</sup>
Note <sup>2</sup> Qualitative Descriptor Total ( / 8)	8	4	4	8	8	6	8	3	6 <sup>2</sup>
Note <sup>3</sup> QUAN <sup>1</sup> + QUAL <sup>2</sup> TOTAL ( /13)	13	8	7	13	11	11	13	7	10 <sup>3</sup>
Note 4. TOTAL ( % ) <sup>4</sup>	100	61.5	53.8	100	84.6	84.6	100	53.8	76.9 % <sup>4</sup>

Table 4.5

*Four Descriptors that Surfaced in all Phases of QUAN + QUAL Analysis*

Descriptor Identifier	Descriptor
1	Personal Expectations
10	Mentor Characteristics and assistance
13	Mentoring Programs and Experiences
16	Emotions during Mentoring Experience

The converged percentage data in Table 4.4 also highlighted that the descriptors which appeared least throughout all phases of the study were:

- (5) University Expectations;
- (7) State Expectations; and
- (9) School/Parish Interactions.

The Beginning Teachers felt that University Expectations (descriptor 5) had little or no relevance after three terms of teaching. It appeared that the majority of Beginning Teachers had moved on with their aspirations and expectations and their minds were now firmly fixed on teaching after three terms in the profession. Principals and CUWA participants did however raise the importance of their expectations of university. Principals felt universities could play a greater role in promoting more country practice experience to help attract potential teachers to the regional areas where principals face the difficult task of sourcing quality applicants. CUWA participants also reflected in their focus group interviews on practical areas such as planning a school retreat which they felt greatly assisted them with their own teaching preparation, and which did not seem to have been covered during their university course.

The descriptor for State Expectations (descriptor 7) first appeared in the Beginning Teachers' surveys after their three terms of teaching and was not raised in either the CUWA

data or Beginning Teacher focus group interviews in March/April. The lack of appearance or discussion around this particular descriptor is predictable as the requirement for Early Career Teachers (ECTs) to gain State Teacher Registration occurs shortly after the completion of their internship and before the beginning of their first teaching appointment. Of similar interest were the CUWA internship student discussions centred around National expectations (descriptor 8). Except for a brief discussion in their focus group interviews about NAPLAN data, they did not raise any discussion of National Expectations or the Australia Professional Standards for Teaching (APST). There was, however, a growing professional awareness from Beginning Teachers, who after six months of teaching were more aware of the need through leadership and peer interaction, to understand the language and terminology associated with the APST. Such an awareness may have been the result of their school leaders, mentors or the CEOWA ECT program making the Beginning Teacher aware of the need to start a portfolio of their teaching to demonstrate the requirements of a Proficient teacher in order to meet full registration with the TRBWA (AITSL, 2011a).

The descriptor for School/Parish Interactions (descriptor 9) was mentioned briefly in the CUWA focus group interviews; a country secondary school focus group interview and by country principals in the principal focus group interviews. Again, the lack of appearance of this descriptor would appear understandable, as many Beginning Teachers rely on their leadership/administration team to deal with School/Parish interactions. An exception to this appeared in country areas, where due to proximity to their local parish, many of the Beginning Teachers had greater interaction with parishioners.

The lack of appearance of descriptors 7, 8 and 9 would not thereby warrant their omission from the planning process for a school-based mentoring program because University Expectations; State Expectations; and School/Parish Interactions, would form part of a discussion a mentor could have with their mentee. It would, however, appear unlikely

that these descriptors would form the major focus for a school-based mentoring program, because the Beginning Teachers, unless in a leadership position or planning a Mass or sacramental program, would have no direct involvement with the Parish. The Beginning Teacher may also refer back to their university training but throughout their career would be required to build on such existing knowledge by becoming an ongoing learner. State Expectations that included TRBWA requirements, are an ongoing discussion mentors would be having on a regular basis with an ECT over their first two years of teaching when they are assessed as a proficient teacher by their mentor.

The mixed methods convergent model (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007), as presented in Figure 4.1, is used to interpret the findings for each subsidiary question as presented under the subheadings that follow. These findings lay the foundations for the development of a new Catholic Mentoring Framework discussed in the next chapter.

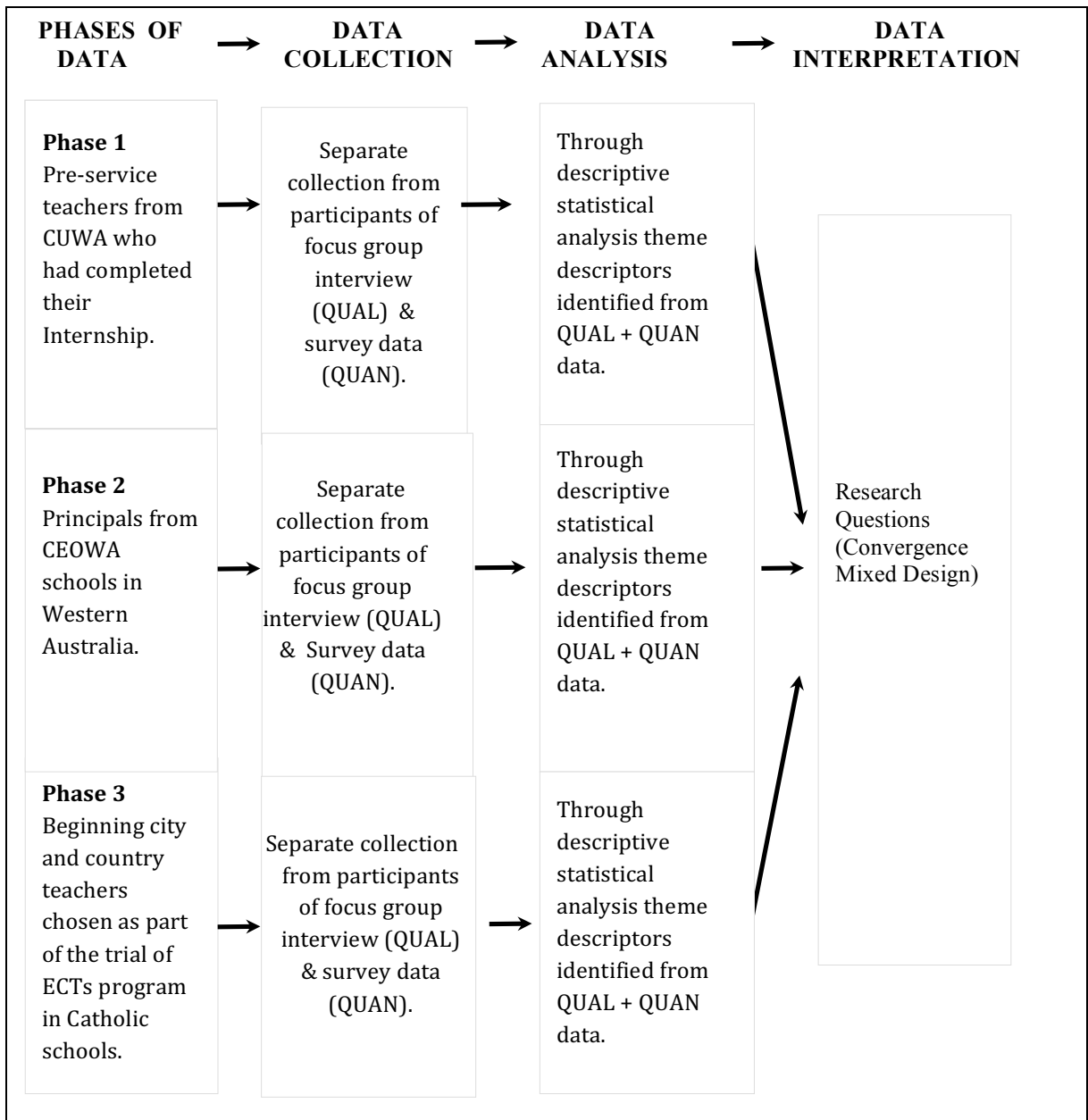


Figure 4.1. Mixed methods convergent model.

### Subsidiary Question One

**Does participation in a mentoring program for Early Career Teachers affect their career aspirations?**

ECTs' experiences during Phase 1 and Phase 3 were the focus of the study, and four survey questions were repeated across these phases to address the above subsidiary question for each phase. The first survey question, which applied to CUWA and ECTs asked, "Did

your experiences with your mentor assist you with teaching?” The responses to the question are presented in Table 4.6 and indicate the percentage of both CUWA and ECT participants involved in a mentoring program. Overall, the majority of mentees agreed that mentoring supported their teaching.

Table 4.6

*CUWA and ECT Participants Identifying their Mentoring Experience as Assisting their Teaching (Simple Count)*

Survey question	CUWA (n=13)		ECT March /April (n = 30)	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Did your experiences with your mentor assist you with teaching?	92.31% (n = 12)	7.69% (n = 1)	66.67% (n = 20)	33.33% (n = 10)

The second survey question put to CUWA and ECTs asked, “From your experience has mentoring benefitted/hindered your teaching?” The results are presented in Table 4.7. Even though CUWA participants found their mentoring experience to be more of a benefit than did ECT participants, overall both groups found the experience beneficial. Open-ended responses affirmed the benefit received. The open-ended question asked was “How could a mentoring program benefit your aspirations for a teaching career?” Responses from both CUWA and ECT participants are presented in Table 4.8 and then coded into seven themes and converted into percentages (Table 4.9).



Table 4.7

*CUWA and ECT Survey Responses Relating to Mentoring Benefitting or Hindering their Teaching (Extended Responses)*

CUWA (n = 13)	ECTs (March/April) (n = 30)
I think it could benefit my aspirations for my teaching career by helping me to learn what works in a classroom, classroom management ideas and allows me to bounce ideas of another person. They are there if you need help, advice or just need to talk. My long term goal would be to be Assistant Principal. I don't know, my mum says I'd be a great Principal as I'm really bossy. I think Assistant Principal would be my long-term goal, if a principalship comes up its great. I think being able to still be in a classroom but oversee all these teachers is probably where I would like to be or how long that will take. {Participant 1}	Mentoring I think can be key for the success of a teacher, especially in the beginning stages. It allows you to see what needs improving, when you need support and assist you in all school related problems. {Participant 1}
Something I will remember for a long time and hopefully use in my own mentoring experience. {Participant 2}	This could help me greatly as I would know more of what to expect and what procedures I would have to go through to reach my goals. {Participant 2}
Provided hindsight and feedback for the future. {Participant 3}	If you are fostered as a graduate teacher right from the start, I believe it can help you to grow within your formative years of teaching, and help to make it a positive experience that will make you want to continue in the pathway for a long time. {Participant 3}
Always seek support to improve -new school - discuss policies and procedures and planning docs. {Participant 4}	It would be fantastic to get some feedback on what I am doing and how I am going with my behaviour management as well as my teaching methods. {Participant 4}
I think it will provide me with guidance on where I am now and where I want to be in the future. It will help me with my Relationships with other teachers at my school. {Participant 5}	It is a support network for new staff and as well as staff that have been in the school a while. A mentoring program allows me to consider teaching from all points of view. It also helps me prepare for taking on the position of mentor further down the line. {Participant 5}
I think a beginner teacher needs the help and support of a network of people who can provide insight and advice into the school and teaching in general. It helps a teacher to learn. {Participant 6}	By fast tracking the development stage and by providing me with first-hand knowledge that otherwise could require many years to grasp. {Participant 6}
I can see where I want to be in five years' time. {Participant 7}	Having someone who has emotionally been through a similar situation is probably the most reassuring thing for me personally and knowing I can continue to bounce ideas off them. {Participant 7}
It is a forum for honest feedback which can then be used to improve teaching. {Participant 8}	The mentoring program provides you with support and the foundation information required to help you get through the day to day dramas and situations. She has helped me become involved in the school community and has helped me feel welcomed. {Participant 8}

Table 4.8

*Open-ended Responses to the Relevance of Mentoring to Career Aspirations*

Survey Question	CUWA (n = 13)		ECT March/April (n = 30)	
	Benefitted	Hindered	Benefitted	Hindered
From your experience has mentoring benefitted/hindered your teaching?	84.60%	15.40%	60%	40%
	n = 11	n = 2	n = 18	n = 12

Table 4.9

*CUWA and ECT Coded Responses (by Theme) of the Value of Mentoring for Career Aspirations*

Survey Question	Question Themes	CUWA	ECT
		Post-Internship (n = 13) %	End Term 1 (n=30) %
How could a mentoring program benefit your aspirations for a teaching career?	1. A desire to continue improving their own teaching.	53	73
	2. Students well-being.	15.38	46.00
	3. Aspirations for leadership positions.	23.08	26.67
	4. Ongoing professional growth and learning.	7.69	20.00
	5. Becoming a mentor.	7.69	3.30
	6. Possibly considering leaving teaching.	0.00	3.30
	7. Work and employment.	15.38	0.00
	Total	122.22 <sup>1</sup>	172.27 <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Participants were able to choose from multiple responses, hence the reason why some participants identified more than one phrase, yielding a total of over 100%.

Table 4.9 results for items 1 and 4 show development in ECTs' thinking from a Post-Internship (Pre-Service) teacher to Beginning Teacher, in the form of a desire to continue improving their own teaching and engage in further professional learning. What is of

significance is that the recognition of the need to grow professionally increased by some threefold from Post-Internship (Pre-Service) teacher to ECT. Such growth is recognised as an important factor in four of the standards for Graduate Teachers in the APST documentation.

The APST (section in parenthesis) that relate to items 1 and 4, in Table 4.9 are:

1. Professional Knowledge (1.1): Know students and how they learn; Know the content and how to teach it;
2. Know the content and how to teach it (2.1): Content and teaching strategies of the teaching area;
3. Professional Practice (3.1): Plan for and implement effective teaching and learning; and
4. Professional Engagement (6.2): Engage in professional learning and improve practice. (AITSL, 2011, pp. 8, 10, 12, 18 respectively).

Item 2 shows considerable development in realising that mentoring of a teacher is beneficial for student wellbeing. What is significant here is that such an understanding has increased by over threefold. In terms of aspiring to become a leader (item 3), data indicates that about a quarter of both CUWA and ECT participants hold such aspirations. Although this is not indicative of how their thinking might change into the future, it does perhaps suggest that more pressing issues are currently at the forefront of their thinking. As far as items 6 and 7 are concerned, the change from pre-service to ECT are predictable. For item 7, concerns relating to securing employment disappear once one has been employed. Perhaps the CUWA pre-service teachers scored higher on this item as they felt that the internship mentoring they had received might hold them in good stead for finding a teaching position.

For item 6, it is reasonable to infer that the possibility of leaving the profession becomes a reality only after one has been in the profession in any bona fide way. Such thinking may in fact be for reasons other than those relating to mentoring. Focus group insights seem to corroborate item 6 data in that, when asked about the possibility of leaving the profession, only two respondents indicated that they may leave after their first three terms of teaching. Finally, the result for item 5 seems to suggest a growing understanding that mentoring someone is not an easy task.

## **Subsidiary Question Two**

**What perceptions do CUWA Post-Internship (Pre-Service) teachers hold regarding mentoring prior to the commencement of their teaching career?**

To answer question two, the 18 theme descriptors identified from the literature were tested against the research data (QUAN), with corroboration then being sought through focus group interviews (QUAL). For each descriptor, the data was tallied and converted into a percentage for the purpose of identifying the descriptors that had appeared in both the survey and focus group interviews. Of the 18 descriptors, it was found that only four had not appeared in either the survey or focus group interviews, that is, had not received a combined score of 100%.

Table 4.10

*Mixed Methods Descriptors and their Identification for the CUWA Phase of the Study*

	Concept/Theme descriptor								
QUAN + QUAL Phases	1. Personal Expectations	2. Parental Expectations	3. Staff Expectations	4. Principal & Leadership Expectations	5. University Expectations & Training	6. Catholic Education Expectations	7. State Expectations	8. National Expectations	9. School/ Parish Interactions
Note <sup>1</sup> Quantitative Descriptor Total (/ 1)	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1 <sup>1</sup>
Note <sup>2</sup> Qualitative Descriptor Total (/ 1)	1	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	1 <sup>2</sup>
Note <sup>3</sup> QUAN <sup>1</sup> + QUAL <sup>2</sup> TOTAL (/ 2)	2	2	2	1	2	2	0	2	2 <sup>3</sup>
TOTAL (%)	100	100	100	50	100	100	0	100	100 %
	Concept/Theme descriptor								
QUAN + QUAL Phases	10. Mentor Characteristics	11. City vis-à-vis Country	12. Professional Development	13. Mentoring Programs	14. Group Aspirations re mentoring	15. Personal Aspirations re mentoring	16. Emotions during the mentoring experience	17. Leadership Mentor Training	18. Mentoring opportunities & Interactions
Note <sup>1</sup> Quantitative Descriptor Total (/ 1)	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	0	1 <sup>1</sup>
Note <sup>2</sup> Qualitative Descriptor Total (/ 1)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1 <sup>2</sup>
Note <sup>3</sup> QUAN <sup>1</sup> + QUAL <sup>2</sup> TOTAL (/ 2)	2	2	2	2	1	2	2	0	2 <sup>3</sup>
TOTAL (%)	100	100	100	100	50	100	100	0	100

In support of the information identified in Table 4.10, the survey question: “From your own experience, how has mentoring benefitted or hindered your teaching?”, yielded the following responses from each of the 13 participants,

It has definitely benefited my teaching as it enables me to gain guidance and advice from an experienced teacher. A mentor was also there to help me during writing reports as I had not done this before, so I really did need some extra help and they were always there when I needed them. **{CUWA Participant 1}**

Helping me to learn to trust myself and my instincts. Knowing that I am creative and I have good ideas. The realisation, I have great communication skills with students, parents and staff. Helped to enjoy teaching rather than spending majority of the time stressed out or concerned. **{CUWA Participant 2}**

Benefitted because I have learnt a lot more about how to deal with different situations, parents and kids. **{CUWA Participant 3}**

Did not receive a lot [of mentoring] **{CUWA Participant 4}**

Continuous improvement **{CUWA Participant 5}**

Develop great classroom management skills. Assessment has become meaningful. Ability to easily for great relationships. **{CUWA Participant 6}**

Given me ideas. Given me focus areas to hone in on which helped me master things I was not good at. **{CUWA Participant 7}**

My experiences have shown me what is expected of full time teachers and the workload they have. **{CUWA Participant 8}**

In my internship practicum, I benefited from my teacher in many ways. **{CUWA Participant 9}**

I received very little mentoring from my mentor teacher. I had to find out everything myself. A mentor needs to be willing to mentor. **{CUWA Participant 10}**

It was very good but there was no designated time for it apart from after or before school. **{CUWA Participant 11}**

It has benefitted because you always have someone to go to if you're unsure of something or need help, without feeling judged or incompetent. {CUWA Participant 12}

Benefitted. {CUWA Participant 13}

The benefit of providing a mentoring program for internship students as part of an ECT's ongoing learning was evident through the participants' comments and was previously identified in the literature review chapter of the study (Boreen, Johnson, Niday & Potts, 2009; Bouffard, 2013; Heikkinen, 2012; Riley, 2010).

Further analysis of the CUWA focus group interview responses revealed five (of the 18) theme descriptors reflecting perceptions about their recent mentoring and how experiences might affect their future teaching career. The five descriptors, together with the number of times they occurred during the interview are presented in Table 4.11.

Table 4.11

*Five Descriptors Identified in the CUWA Focus Group Interviews about their Perceptions of Mentoring (n = 5)*

Descriptor Identifier (Table 3.1)	Descriptors	Occurrence <sup>1</sup>
5	University expectations and training	8
10	Mentor characteristics and assistance	5
8	National Expectations (Understanding of Australia Professional Standards for Teaching (APST)teaching standards that arose from their internship and university experiences)	4
1	Personal expectations	3
9	School/Parish interaction	3

Notes:

<sup>1</sup> Occurrence represents the number of times that a particular descriptor was discussed in the CUWA focus group interview, hence the reason why a descriptor could appear multiple times.

In identifying the two most frequently occurring descriptors, “Recent University Program Expectations” and “Mentor Characteristics”, pre-service teachers discussed the relevance of their university and internship experiences in the transition to becoming a Beginning Teacher. With regard to “Recent University Program Expectations”, CUWA focus group participants commented on the desirability of more pre-internship information on running retreats; how to approach the first day/week of school; parental expectations and how to conduct parent meetings; and how to approach the mathematics curriculum area in an ECE setting. Such information might be useful to the CUWA in revising of some academic units of study to include these concerns. The other most frequently occurring descriptor was “Mentor Characteristics”. These characteristics of mentors were observed in the survey data and are presented in Table 4.12.

Table 4.12

*Four Main Mentor Characteristics Identified in CUWA Survey Data*

Identifier	Mentor Characteristic	n = 13 (%)
1	Displaying understanding	30.77
2	Providing feedback on the mentees teaching	30.77
3	Being supportive	23.08
4	Demonstrating effective teaching skills themselves	15.38
	Total	100.00

Apart from “Recent University Program Expectations” and “Mentor Characteristics” that appear in Table 4.12, the other three descriptors identified related to: Personal Expectations (descriptor 1), National Expectations (descriptor 8) and, School/Parish interaction (descriptor 9). Although these descriptors were mentioned by participants, they did not have a high frequency occurrence, possibly because expectations may not have been



formed prior to entering and understanding employer expectations; statutory expectations may have been covered in university units and so known; and school/parish interactions appeared to be restricted to those CUWA participants who undertook their internship in country schools.

Reference not made to several descriptors was in either CUWA survey or focus group interviews are noted. The omission of descriptor 17, “Providing assistance for leaders in mentor training”, was perhaps due to the lack of opportunity a student experienced in not being privy to the conversations occurring between a leader and mentor. Despite the absence of the descriptor, school leadership and university supervisors did play a significant role in the mentoring experience as noted by several CUWA participants,

Yes, you just want that advice. Like on my second prac I was up north and there was supposed to be my prac supervisor and then she decided or CEO decided that she was going to be acting principal somewhere else which left us without a principal and me without a prac supervisor. So, then I didn't really necessarily get along with my prac supervisor really well and especially towards the end small town, word travels even if it is the wrong word, and there's no-one for me to go to or talk to and yeah it was difficult.  
**{CUWA Participant 1}**

It's hard when you haven't got a uni supervisor but a HOPP [Head of Professional Practice – a university approved school-based mentor]. I've always had a HOPP at XXXX. I had an acting principal and there was no Uni supporter who wanted to come out there and at then again on this prac I had the principal. Luckily they've been really good. But there's been times where I've just wanted to ask advice from my prac supervisor on how to talk to a teacher or you know just raise an issue and I can't really go to anyone and you don't really want to go above their head and go to Uni. So, like again, suck it up and move on. **{CUWA Participant 2}**

The other descriptor not raised by participants in the CUWA focus group interviews was in the area of “State Expectations” (descriptor 7). The descriptor referred to student initial experiences with State Teacher Board Registration (TRBWA) and State Government legislative requirements. The non-mention of this descriptor indicated the students were still very much preoccupied at the focus group interview stage with the “here and now”, having

only recently completed their final exams and being at the time, still two months from entering the workforce. Further, the lack of exposure to TRBWA requirements could allude to the possibility that their mentor teacher did not have significant knowledge or training themselves of the TRBWA requirements needed to provide feed-back to their mentees in the area.

Survey questions 5, 6, 7, 13 and 15 (Appendix G, Figures 4.2 – 4.6) revolved around the nature and type of feedback received during their internship journey. These five questions are now considered in detail. Question 5 asked, “How did your school provide feedback to you about your teaching?” (Figure 4.2). The participants’ top two responses to the question were through a mentor teacher (84.62 %) and university supervisor (69.23%). The feedback provided to internship students indicated that the structured mentoring relationship coordinated by the CUWA between supervisor and partner school, assisted the majority interns with their teaching. The relevance of the CUWA internship model, which has already established a successful partnership between the university and the participating school, raises the possibility of such a program being utilised by the CEOWA, in the establishment of any future mentor training programs.

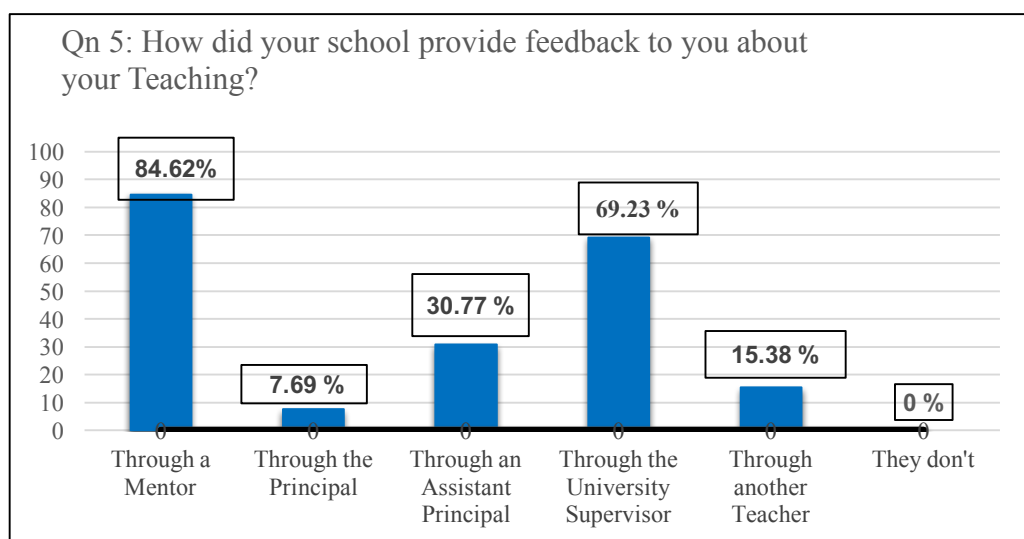


Figure 4.2. CUWA teacher perceptions of feedback during their internship.

Question 6 asked, “Was the majority of the feedback related to: teaching and learning; school procedures; classroom management; teaching Religious Education; faith issues; and developing better interpersonal skills?” The majority of the feedback provided to internship students was in two key areas: teaching and learning (61.54%) and classroom management (38.46%) ( Figure 4.3). The two areas are connected in that effective classroom management allows for effective teaching and learning, and teaching and learning is the main task of the teacher.

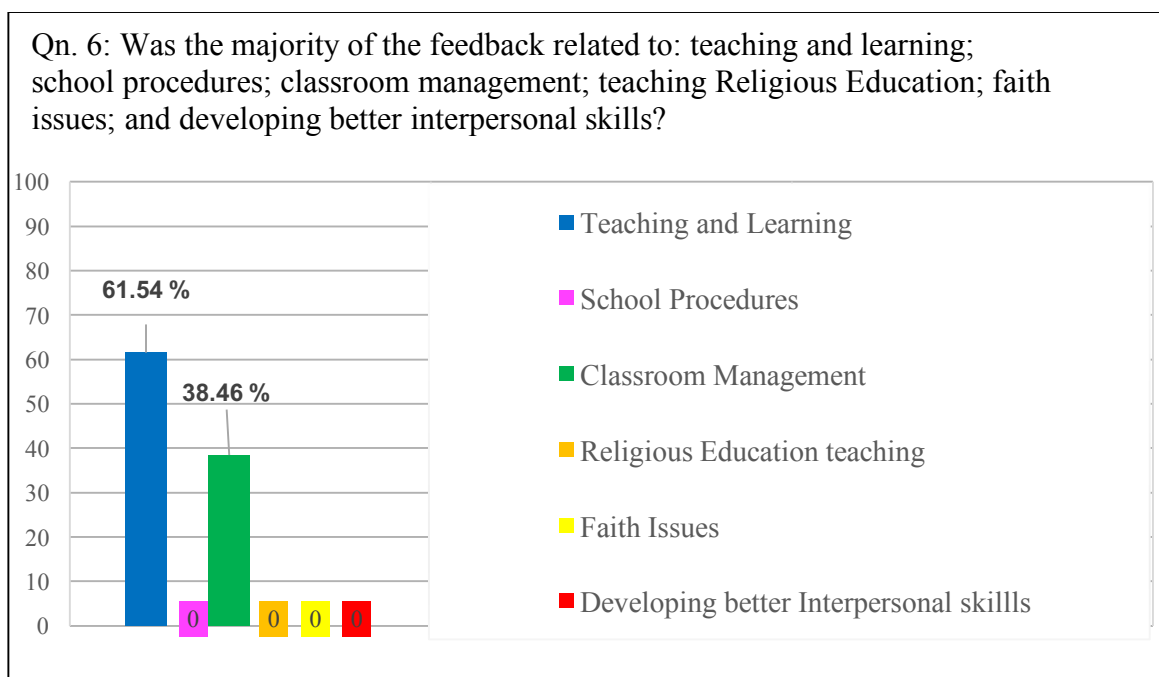
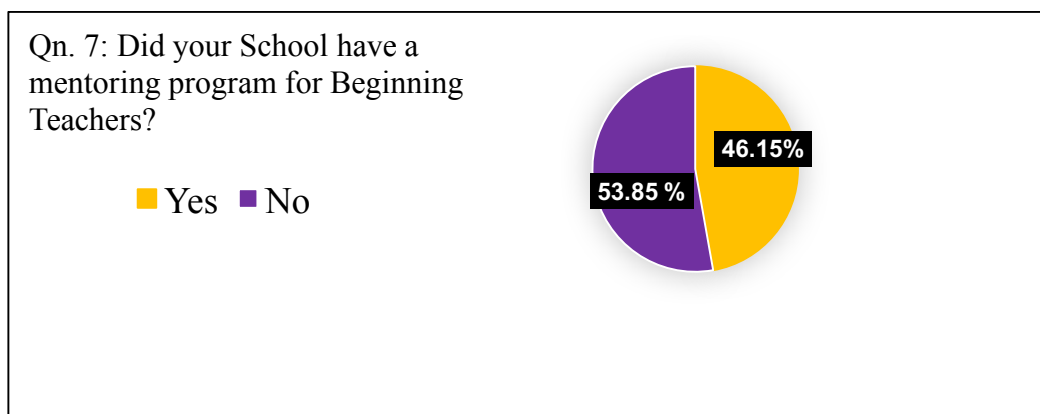


Figure 4.3. Areas of feedback provided to CUWA teachers on internship.

An area of concern that surfaced was related to Religious Education. Despite previous academic units being undertaken in Religious Education, students indicated that a lack of feedback was provided by mentors in this learning area during the internship. In a Catholic school, Religious Education is considered a ninth learning area, whose teachings of the New Testament and Catholic Traditions underpin the teaching of the other eight learning areas. In a Catholic secondary school, Religious Education is also a compulsory learning area, becoming a Year 12 ATAR (Australian Tertiary Admission Rank) subject in 2015.

Question 7 asked, “Did your school have a mentoring program for Beginning Teachers”? The data identified that for six out of the 13 participants, schools had a formal mentoring program for a Beginning Teacher (Figure 4.4). As data was gathered post the internship, perhaps some students were not consciously aware of how mentoring had actually assisted their teaching; or they may not have associated the assistance they had received with any formal “mentoring” procedure.



*Figure 4.4.* CUWA student recognition of a mentoring program for ECTs in their school.

Question 13 asked, “In the following areas, what levels of support did you get from your supervisor?” The areas identified were: pastoral support; teaching ideas; communication strategies with parents, staff and children; emotional support; extra help and extra time beyond formal requirements. The two highest levels of satisfaction identified by participants were the areas of classroom management and emotional support. In these two areas, nine out of 13 participants found support to be either at a satisfactory or highly satisfactory (Figure 4.5). The value of providing support to assist Post-Internship (Pre-Service) teachers and ECTs with their emotions whilst teaching was previously raised as a key finding in the literature review (Hargreaves, 1998; McNally & Blake, 2008; Riley, 2013). Overall, participants were pleased with the amount of support received by supervisors in the seven

areas identified. The one response in the “highly dissatisfied” category seems to be an outlier and may be the result of incorrectly interpreting the question.

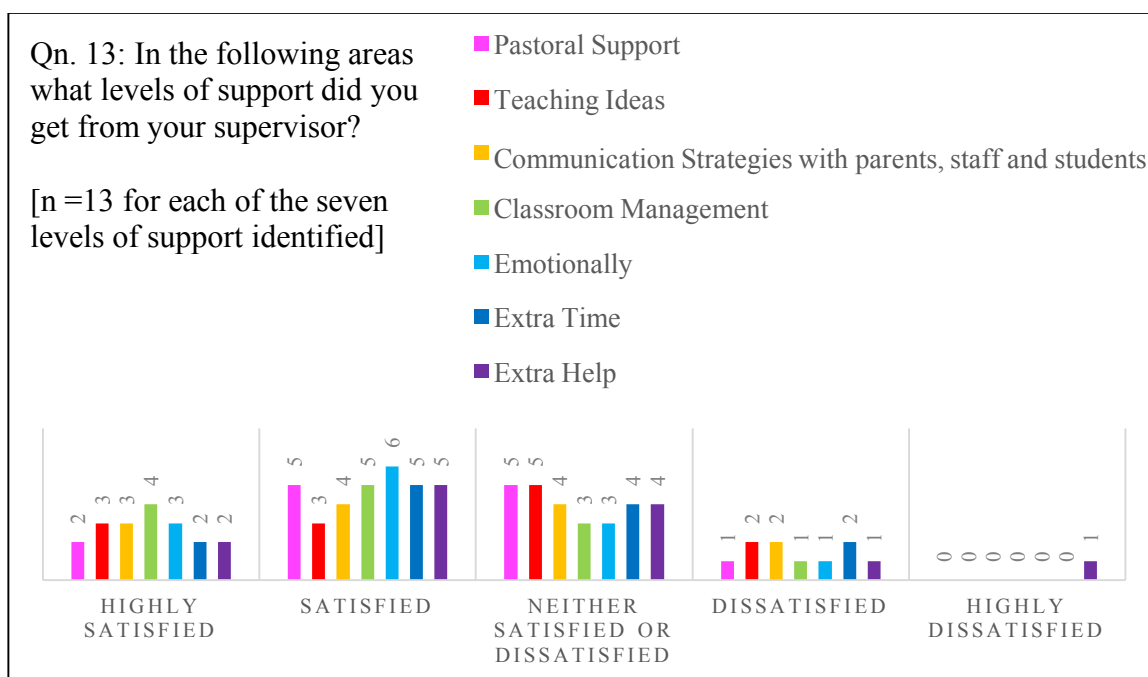


Figure 4.5. Level of Support given to CUWA teachers from their mentor/supervisor.

Question 15 asked, “What types of school programs or teacher support were most helpful to you in the first weeks of internship/ATP [Assistant Teacher Program]?” During their initial internship/ATP, two main types of support were considered by internship students as most helpful for settling into their school; these were, “Chat time with mentor” (informal) (84.6% of participants) and “Having shared time with mentor” (formal) (Figure 4.6). Post-Internship (Pre-Service) teachers also valued sharing at Professional Learning Community (PLC) meetings (46.2%) and extra chat time with assistant principals (46.2%) as two other valuable structures of mentoring support (46.2%), in their initial weeks of the internship.

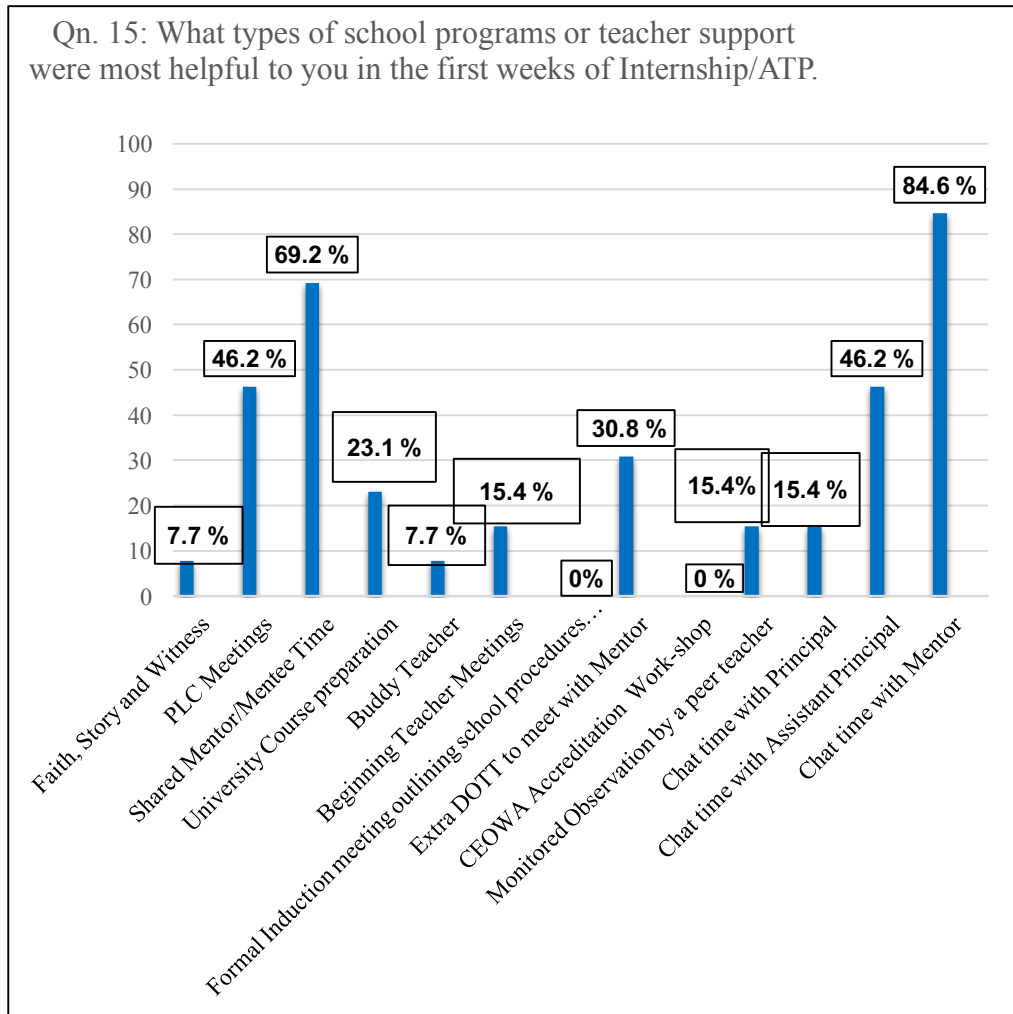


Figure 4.6. Types of programs CUWA interns found useful during their internship

The school and mentor support programs provided to interns (Figure 4.6), together with comments reflected by the Post-Internship (Pre-Service) teachers, identified key features of school programs that most assisted the interns in their journey. The following focus group interview responses from Post-Internship (Pre-Service) teachers provide an indication of their hope for accessing a mentoring program in the schools to which they will be assigned,

I'm hoping the other year 3 teacher at my school will be able to lead me a bit like as a buddy and I haven't met them yet so I'm not sure how that will go otherwise I'll be coming up with everything as I've never had Year 3!  
**{CUWA Participant 1}**

I'm going up next week to meet the teacher I'm replacing and she's saying I'm going to help you and show me you what I have done and how I've

structure it you can base yourself off that I'll be going up for the 3 days next week. {CUWA Participant 2}

During my first few days of teaching the year one and two teacher's helped me find resources and understand the school policies and procedures as well as the assistant principal. The year one and two teachers are both first year's out, so they understood what position I was in and were able to clue me in and help me find my way. The assistant principal was also very helpful as she is approachable and always willing to listen and offer advice. {CUWA Participant 3}

Well there are 3 teachers. One from last year and she is doing ECE, I'm doing junior primary and a new upper primary so. So, there's 2 new teachers out of the 3. {CUWA Participant 4}

I think with me I'm going into my prac school, so I have already established those relationships with the staff. I went to tea with the Year 3 teacher in X [town] one night so we celebrated my job so things like that so just to know I have a base up there. ...Going into year 5 I hope my mentor teacher will give me something just to give me that starting point. I know I probably won't follow it to the letter but you know you just want someone to say this is where I start. {CUWA Participant 5}

One role that Post-Internship (Pre-Service) teachers could prepare themselves for more adequately in terms of imminent employment was identified as the monitored observation of their teaching. Of interest is that only 15.4% of interns saw the monitored observation of their teaching as being useful (Question 15, Figure 4.6). As the question asked how relevant this strategy was in the "first weeks of the internship", it may have been that at such an early stage, observation was perceived as threatening and hence undesirable. With hindsight, it may have been better to exclude the words "first weeks" from the question, or to differentiate between "first weeks" and "final weeks". Such a strategy may have yielded a more accurate picture regarding the value of peer observation.

### **Subsidiary Question Three**

**How have graduate teacher perceptions of mentoring changed as a result of having been teaching for three school terms?**

The third Question to be addressed involved the perceptions of mentoring by graduates (now ECTs) who had been teaching for three terms. To answer the question, results

of the mixed methods analysis (Table 4.13) identified five descriptors from Phase 2 of the CEOWA focus group interviews and survey data that were relevant: Descriptor 1: Personal Expectations; Descriptor 10: Mentor Characteristics and Assistance, Descriptor 13: Mentoring Programs and Experiences; Descriptor 14: Group Aspirations re mentoring; and Descriptor 16: Emotions during the Mentoring Experience. These five descriptors were influenced by Descriptor 15: Personal Aspirations re mentoring. The target sample of ECTs involved in this phase was relatively even with city participants (51.35%) slightly outnumbering country participants (48.75%). The perceptions of mentoring were provided by a total of 36 ECTs; comprising 31 ECTs from the trial CEOWA ECT program and 5 ECTs the CUWA focus group interview.

Table 4.13

*Mixed Method Descriptors and their Identification for the ECT Phase of the Study*

	Concept/Theme descriptor								
QUAN + QUAL Phases (n = 36)	1. Personal Expectations	2. Parental Expectations	3. Staff Expectations	4. Principal & Leadership	5. University Expectations & Training	6. Catholic Education Expectations	7. State Expectations	8. National	9. School/ Parish Interactions
Note <sup>1</sup> Quantitative Descriptor Total (/ 3)	3	3	3	3	2	3	2	3	0 <sup>1</sup>
Note <sup>2</sup> Qualitative Descriptor Total (/ 6)	6	3	3	5	0	3	2	3	2 <sup>2</sup>
Note <sup>3</sup> QUAN <sup>1</sup> + QUAL <sup>2</sup> TOTAL (/9)	9	6	6	8	2	6	4	6	2 <sup>3</sup>
TOTAL (%)	100	66.7	69.2	88.9	22.2	66.7	44.4	66.7	22.2 %



Table 4.13 (cont'd.)

	Concept/Theme descriptor								
QUAN + QUAL Phases  (n = 36)	10. Mentor Characteristics	11. City vis-à-vis Country	12. Professional Development Programs	13. Mentoring Programs	14. Group Aspirations re mentoring	15. Personal Aspirations re mentoring	16. Emotions during the mentoring	17. Leadership Mentor Training	18. Mentoring opportunities & Interactions
Note <sup>1</sup> Quantitative Descriptor Total (/ 3)	3	1	2	3	3	2	3	3	3 <sup>1</sup>
Note <sup>2</sup> Qualitative Descriptor Total (/ 6)	6	2	3	6	6	6	6	2	4 <sup>2</sup>
Note <sup>3</sup> QUAN <sup>1</sup> + QUAL <sup>2</sup> TOTAL (/ 9)	9	3	5	9	9	8	9	5	7 <sup>3</sup>
TOTAL (%)	100	33.3	55.6	100	100	88.9	100	55.6	77.8 %

Supported by data arising from a self-reflection questionnaire (Appendix O), it was discovered that an ECT's Personal Expectations (Descriptor 1) were significantly influenced by City verses Country Issues, (Descriptor 11). The geographical location of teaching in a city or country resulted in a noticeable difference in the mentoring relationship provided to an ECT. The Country ECTs commented on feeling a sense of isolation caused by their location and their mentoring perceptions. They commented specifically in focus group interviews on aspects related to adjusting to teachers with differing personalities; school organization; moving home for the first time; and leaving a circle of family and friends in the city.

Examples of comments from focus group interviews from ECTs follow,

There's a few shops, not as many as some towns and it's a nice little area and without that level of support, I would feel really alone. **{Participant 10}**

You hear stories about the whole school almost being in dire straights because everyone does a patch-work job type of thing and that's because no one takes the time

to look at what other people are doing and actually give that productive feedback. **{Participant 2}**

It does make it difficult as a single teacher because I think prior to this year there were only about three of us and it is quite isolated. **{Participant 6}**

The impact of location on the mentoring of an ECT in either a city or country school was supported by focus group interviews and survey data and investigated through a self-reflection questionnaire (Appendices K, L, M, N, O) that posed three questions:

1. How was your relationship with a mentor?
2. How did you feel about your teaching?
3. How was your relationship with your students?

The ECTs were then asked to rate their responses as either: Excellent; Good; Developing; or Not Applicable (as in the case of possibly not having a mentor). Data arising from the above three questions are used as sub-headings to explore some of the changes that occurred in an ECT's perceptions of mentoring.

### **1. How was your Relationship with a Mentor?**

The first question "How was your Relationship with your Mentor?", established that relationships improved as the year progressed for city ECT's. As Figure 4.7 shows, by August, 55% of ECTs recorded an "excellent" relationship with their mentors, compared with only 10% in January. For country ECTs, the figure for August (Figure 4.8) was 33% compared with 0% for January. By August, 50% of all country ECTs recorded a mentoring relationship in the "developing" and "N/A" categories, compared with only 20% for their city counterparts. Such figures indicate the differences that exist in country verses city teaching.

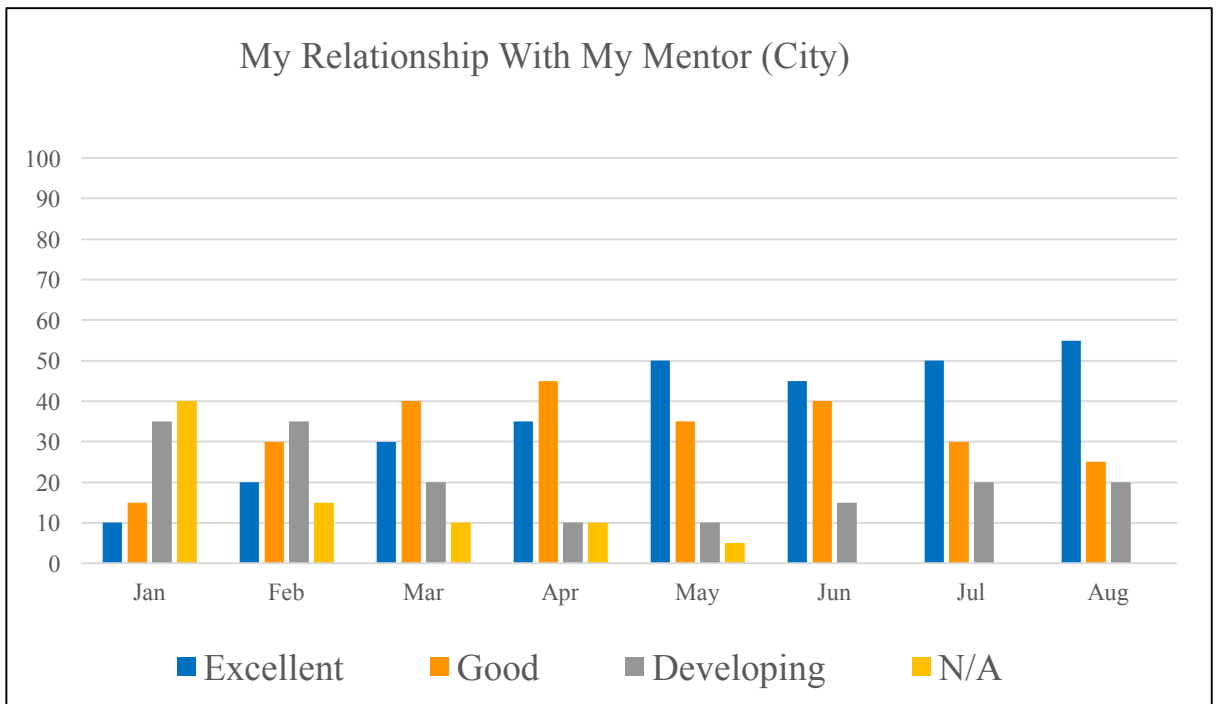


Figure 4.7. Combined city primary and secondary Beginning Teachers' relationship with their mentor.

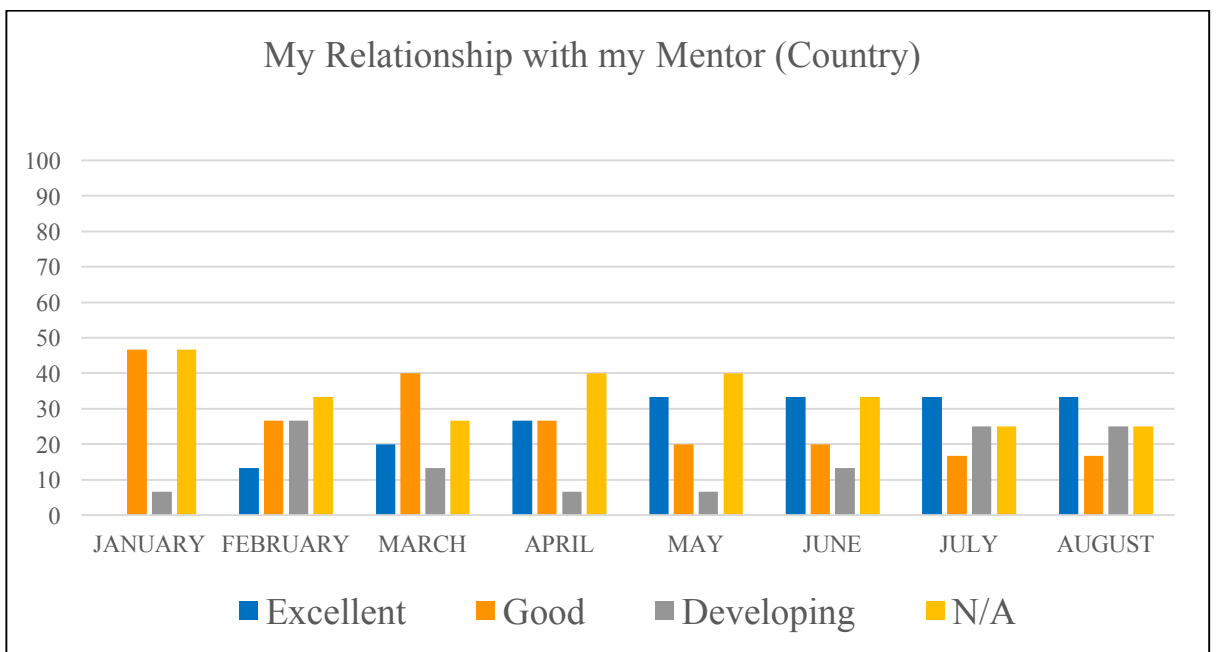


Figure 4.8. Combined country primary and secondary Beginning Teachers' relationship with their mentor.

The mentoring experience of some ECTs, as confirmed by one participant, only confirmed pre-existing knowledge learnt during the internship, "I reckon it hasn't so much

helped me, it's just sort of reconfirmed that what I'm doing is correct" **{Participant 4}**.

Another ECT remarked in relation to the structure of feedback in a mentoring program that "it's not really there" **{Participant 5}**. However, such views do not seem to represent the majority of ECTs. In their first term of teaching, ECTs were asked to describe their mentoring experience, of which 66.67% of respondents replied that mentoring assisted with their teaching and 60% of respondents found the feedback given by their mentor was beneficial to their teaching. Such data suggests that the mentoring experienced by most ECTs was mainly positive.

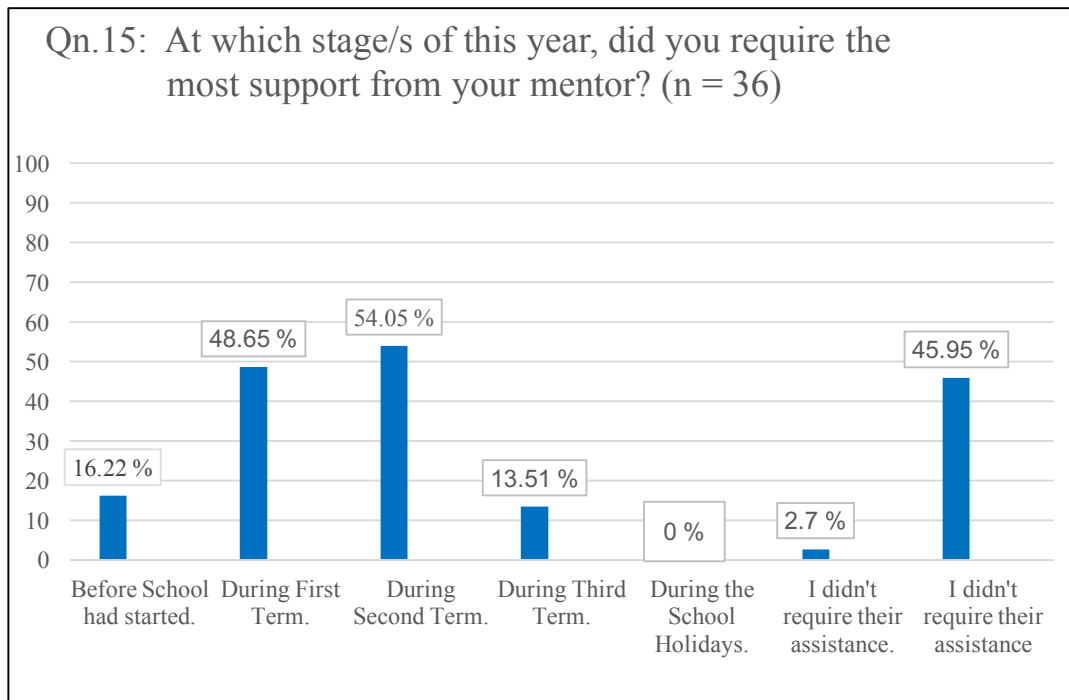
The personal characteristics of a mentor, as reported by Whitaker and Fiore (2013), are an important consideration when school leaders select and match mentors to ECTs. The characteristics of a mentor were sought in all three phases of the study by a single survey question: "Which three characteristics from your own teaching experience are essential for a mentor to possess?" The three highest responses, from each phase of the study, show that a mentor can assist ECTs by exhibiting: emotional support, providing teaching feedback; being knowledgeable about teaching; and showing understanding and empathy to an ECT (Table 4.14). The ability of a mentor to display such skills can affect an ECT's transition into the teaching profession.

Table 4.14

*Characteristics of an Effective Mentor as Identified by the Three Cohorts in the Study*

CUWA	Beginning Teachers	Principals
Providing feedback	Approachability	Empathy
Teaching skills	Honesty	Ability to provide feedback
Understanding and support	Knowledge and understanding	Emotional intelligence

Further investigation of a mentor's characteristics was undertaken through two further survey questions: Descriptor 10: Mentor Characteristics and Descriptor 13: Mentoring Experiences. The survey data (Figure 4.9), asked ECTs: "At which stage of this year did you require the most assistance from your mentor?" (Question 15). After three terms of teaching the participants' top two responses were: during first term (48.65%) and during second term (54.05%). As the year progressed, the assistance required from a mentor was far lower for third term (13.51%). A possible reason for requiring greater mentoring assistance in first and second term could be a result of grappling with new learning protocols such as school reporting, assessment procedures, and conducting parent interviews.



*Figure 4.9.* Stages of the school year when mentoring was of most assistance to an ECT. (Results total to more than 100% as some participants chose more than one category).

The two most beneficial areas of feedback provided by a mentor were related to the “Exchange of Teaching Ideas” and “Social Conversation” as represented in Question 16 and displayed in Table 4.15.

Table 4.15

*Types of Feedback Provided to ECTs During Three Terms of Teaching.*

Answer Choices	Total Respondents	Responses (%)
Exchange of teaching ideas	26	70.27
Social conversation	26	70.27
Religious education	4	10.81
Critique of my teaching	13	35.14
Australia Professional Standards for Teaching (APST)	7	18.92
Accreditation	3	8.11
Manner of life	3	8.11
Communication strategies with parents, staff and students	21	56.76
Classroom management	21	56.76
Reporting advice	18	48.65
Extra help	9	24.32
Other	2	5.41

Note: (Results total to more than 100% as some participants chose more than one category).

The feedback provided for ECTs, through the “Exchange of Teaching Ideas” is a current strength of the Catholic Education system, as it enhances an ECTs repertoire of teaching ideas and strategies. Social conversation, on the other hand, poses a concern as this source of feedback appears less structured and more informal than the higher-order level of structured feedback espoused by William and Black (2001) and Hattie (2009). An emphasis on the development of structured higher-order feedback is therefore necessary for any mentor-training or mentoring program aimed at assisting with ECT learning. Such a notion was supported by Darling-Hammond (2013) who argued, “Even though mentoring programs

for Beginning Teachers are becoming more common, only about half of novices receive regular [read formal, structured] mentoring from a teacher” (p. 101).

The introduction of a structured mentoring program which promotes higher-level feedback activities through strategies such as action research, coaching, modelling, and observation, and is tailored toward the professional learning requirements of ECTs against the APST, would likely be more beneficial to an ECT’s teaching than relying solely on social conversation for feedback. Related to this aspect, the low mentor feedback provided in the key area of Religious Education, a cornerstone of the Catholic Education ethos, was a concerning statistic for Catholic Education in Western Australia (Vatican, 2016). Alarming, in this research, the ECTs’ lowest forms of feedback from a mentor related to: Religious Education, 10.81%; Accreditation to teach RE, 8.11% and Manner of Life Issues, 8.11% (Table 4.15). One feasible explanation for the low feedback in these areas related to a report that 81% of all Catholic teachers are not practicing Catholics (Curry, 2016).

Darling-Hammond (2013) observed that very few ECTs in their first year of teaching “have the chance to study any aspect of teaching for more than a day or two” (p. 101). Such a scenario may lead to some ECTs experiencing doubt about their teaching ability, more so if their mentoring is ineffective. Given Darling-Hammond’s concern, the second question asked of ECTs becomes highly relevant: “How did you feel about your teaching?”

## **2. How did you feel about your Teaching?**

The investigation of Descriptor 1: Personal Expectations; and Descriptor 16: Emotions during the Mentoring Experience was undertaken via the second question which was, “How did you feel about your teaching?” (Figures 4.10 city; & 4.11 country). Data showed that 93% of city ECTs felt either good or excellent about their development as a teacher by August. However, only 80% of country ECTs felt either good or excellent about their development as a teacher at the same period in time. The influence of location on the



development of a mentoring relationship may explain why country ECTs (20%) are four times more likely than city ECTs (5%) not to feel as confident with their teaching. Perhaps the mentoring variation experienced by those ECTs in the country showed the transient nature of life for an ECT working and living in a country town. The intrinsic interplay of both working and living in the same town as their students may require future investigation as to whether their own confidence to teach was influenced by either a lack of trained mentors, or as a consequence of moving away from home for the first time (Clune, 2013).

An ECT struggling with confidence might thus benefit from the assistance of a trained mentor.

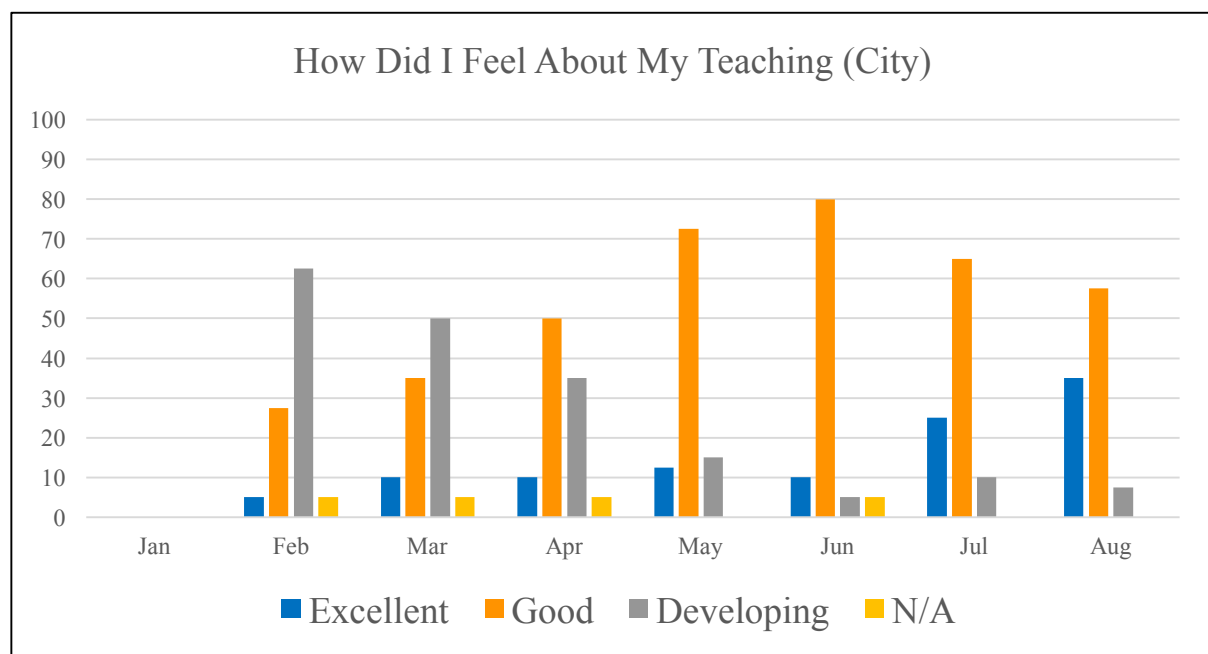


Figure 4.10. Combined city Beginning Teachers' perceptions of how they felt about the profession after three terms of teaching.

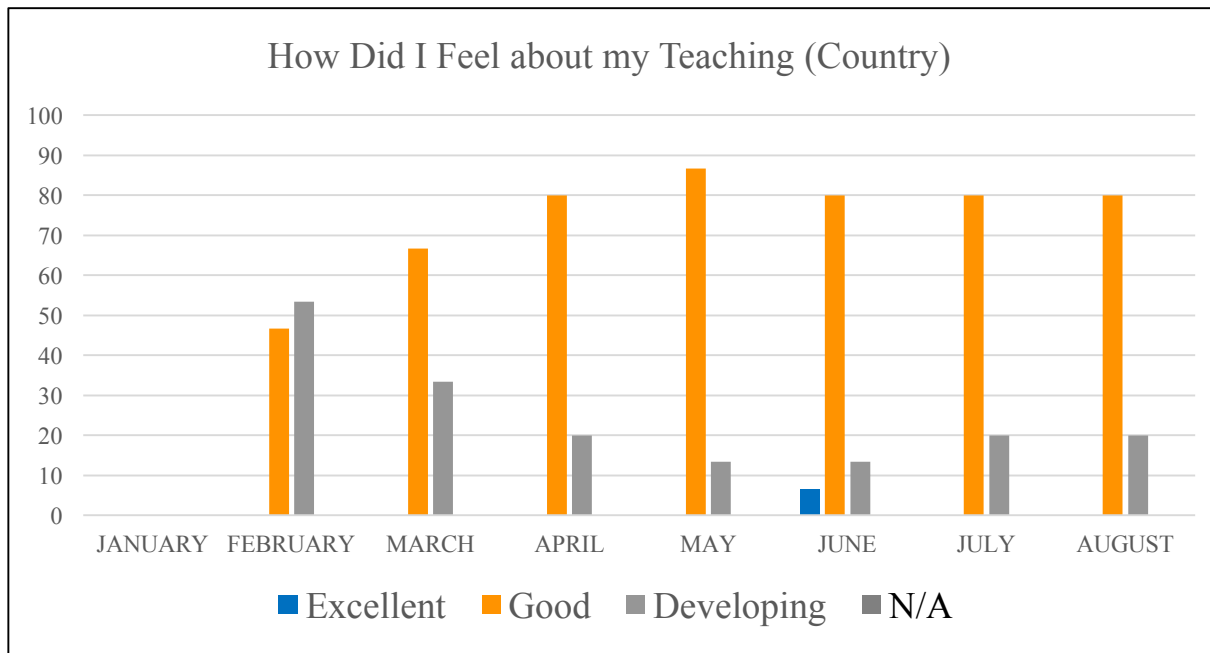


Figure 4.11. Combined country Beginning Teachers’ perceptions of how they felt about the profession after three terms of teaching.

Confidence-building is certainly something that can be facilitated by an effective mentor. As Dinham, Ingvarson and Kleinhenz (2008) observed:

While not everyone is suited to teaching or should be a teacher, being an effective teacher is not a matter of innate ability or personality, but prior learning, motivation, support and ongoing professional development. All teachers benefit from mentoring, feedback, supportive leadership and targeted professional learning (p. 13).

It is important to remember though, as the following quotes reveal, that a mentor is only likely to assist with confidence-building if that mentor has been adequately trained and is committed to the task:

I started towards the end of first term last year and was with a mentor teacher and I didn’t see her at all last year ’cause she is the deputy and it was just too full or too busy and I went back when all these guys started this year and said look can I do the mentoring thing again, they put me with the same person. {Country Beginning Teacher 2}

Someone that has a bit of experience, but not like 20 years you want someone who is kind of semi still attached to what issues you may be going

through, like probably someone who has been out 5 years would probably be quite helpful to us. **{Country Beginning Teacher 3}**

You have some of the mentors who don't even teach any more, they teach one period and your like cool and they come into your lesson and they like you could have done this and that and like I'm sorry I have 50 minutes.  
**{Country Beginning Teacher 6}**

The type of mentoring assistance available to both city and country ECTs was further explored through a survey question (Table 4.16; Qn. 18.): "Which phrases below, best describe your teaching journey this year?" The question delved into Descriptor 1: ECTs personal expectations and confirmed their revelations about the importance of mentoring. Mentoring enabled ECTs to envisage their teaching journey, through a variety of ways, such as reporting (72.22%); professional learning (66.67%); teaching methods (55.56%) and controlling a range of emotions (44.44%).

Table 4.16.

*Phrases that best Described an ECT's Journey after Three Terms of Teaching*

Answer Choices	Total Responses (%)	Total Respondents
A complete learning curve	66.67	24
Controlling a range of emotions	44.44	16
Learning how to work with teachers and staff	36.11	13
Learning new procedures	63.89	23
Learning new teaching methods	55.56	20
Learning new class management strategies	58.33	21
Learning about report systems	72.22	26
Learning about my own faith	5.56	2
		Total: 36 <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Participants were able to choose from multiple responses giving a total greater than 100%.

Two of the fundamental learning areas raised by ECTs (Table 4.16) that directly assisted their confidence in teaching were: “Learning new class management strategies” (55.56%) and “Learning new teaching methods” (58.33%). The inclusion of these two areas in the formation of a system-based mentor-training program would likely assist mentors with the implementation of targeted teaching strategies such as cooperative learning, as suggested by Johnson, Johnson and Smith (2013). As one ECT observed in the focus group interviews (Appendix M), the importance of a positive relationship with her mentor was important for the following reason,

So just having that mentor teacher there to talk about what you have done with the kids and issues you're having with some of the students that sort of support you know and someone there... sharing with somebody.  
{Participant 17}

It is understandable that novice teachers are likely to look to their more experienced counterparts for assistance and advice. The level of general confidence appeared to be related to the level of support an ECT received from their school in adjusting to new living conditions, especially in the country. One country ECT commented,

I think, um from my personal experience, I lived at home with mum and dad, brother and sister never moved out...use to all the noise or the barking and that, now I'm in a big 4-bedroom house by myself, like you can hear all the clocks ticking and everything like that. **{Participant 10}**

The country ECT went on to add,

It is pretty strange but I wouldn't have moved to the country and I didn't know this was going to happen, without the great support network that I have. People just on my first week there, would knock on my door "how are things going, how's the house going"? You know for me that's good because I felt instantly comfortable with some people and now I've made some really great friends that I can just ring up and they just pop around and say how things are going, that's great because I'm by myself and some of them have been through that too! **{Participant 10}**

Another Country ECT, who had experienced two temporary six-month contracts in two different country schools, expressed similar feelings, emphasizing the importance that ECTs place on feeling welcomed and receiving effective mentoring,

Now I've changed schools I've got really good support and I've got a mentor... my principal in my new school. I was up north for six months it was just like here is the classroom and here are the keys. I didn't have any idea what they were talking about you are not told what's going on it is just kind of... it's assumed that you know. Whereas at the school I'm at now which is in a closer country school, it's been really good they've acknowledged that you're new and you kind of don't know what you're talking about. **{Participant 13}**

Principals too identified certain mentor characteristics that would support newly qualified teachers. They themselves were happy to assist ECTs and were grateful to have

mentors upon whose services they could call, as the following responses to focus group interviews indicate,

We've got two new graduates and probably the same next year. I'm just lucky I've got some good leaders who are happy to be mentors to these people {Principal 7}

It's also in living, I mean I had to go with one teacher and teach him how to stock up his fridge ... My husband was shocked that I could provide that (Laughter) but you do go beyond the call of duty {Principal 6}

Time and personnel. Schools are busy places, teachers are busy people. Sometimes, remote schools have added pressures of staff turnover and the need to continuously have something in place for Beginning Teachers. {Principal 14}

It is true you get some staff who have lived by themselves in Perth. I've got one staff member who didn't even know how to make their own bed ... We had a staff member have an accident on coming back from PD just recently; it's a real issue for regional schools {Principal 5}

Good mentors are not only invaluable from an ECT's perspective, they are also of great assistance to the principal. Ultimately though, it is the fact that well mentored ECTs are more likely to have a positive affect on their students, and this is the third question that is now explored: "How was your relationship with your students?"

### **3. How was your Relationship with your Students?**

The data for this third question (Appendix O), indicated that by August ECTs in the city reported a better relationship with their students in the "excellent" category (68 %), compared to country ECTs (54%). There also appears to be variation in how fast city ECTs developed "excellent" relationship with their students when compared with their country counterparts. The month of May seems to be a turning point in "excellent" relationship development for city participants (35%) but not for country ECTs (12%), suggesting that relationships in the country take longer to develop. The feeling of geographical isolation was a plausible explanation for the lower country ECT-student relationship and a possible

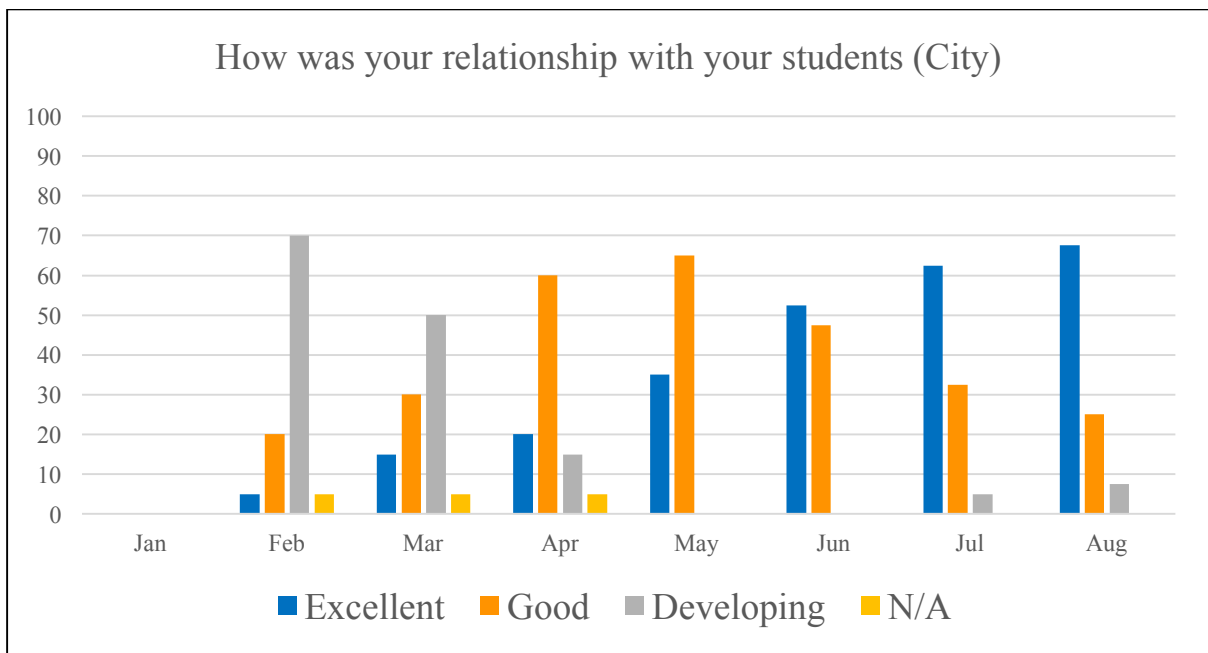
determinant in influencing the learning of country students as was identified by the following responses from focus group interviews,

With our school culture you have teachers coming and going and coming and going **{Beginning Teacher 4}**.

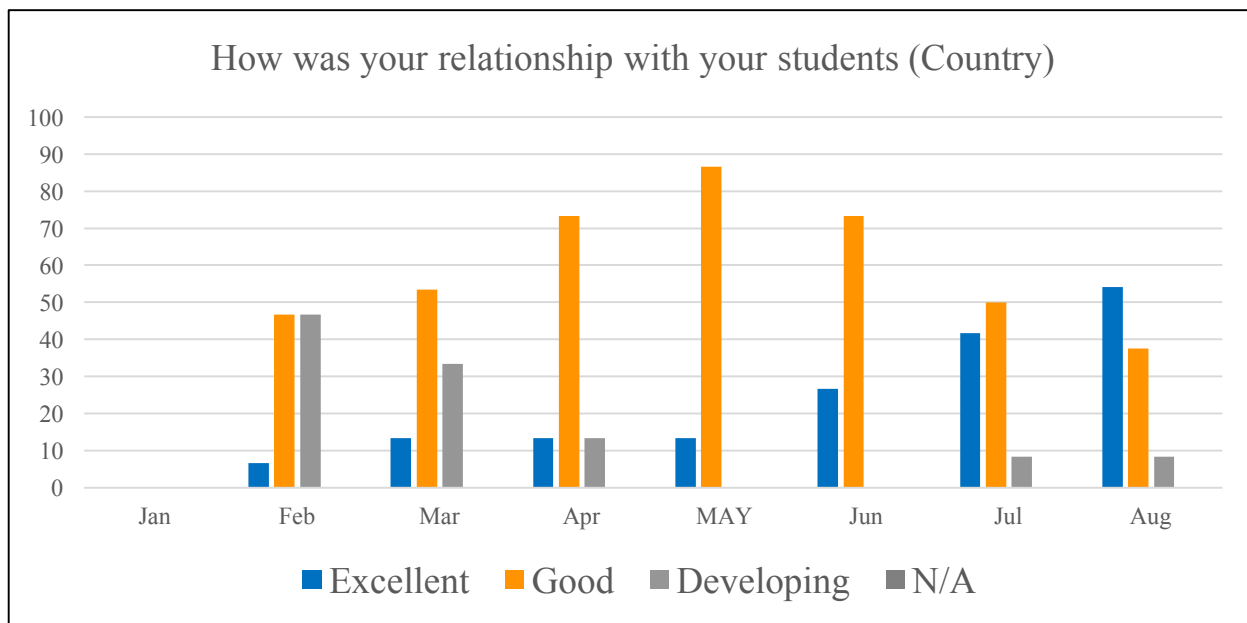
The kids don't like change and a whole lot of new teachers... **{Beginning Teacher 2}**.

They ask all the time are you going to be here next year, yeah... **{Beginning Teacher 6}**.

It may be the case that a greater emphasis on mentoring, with system-based support, may lead to greater staff stability in country areas.



*Figure 4.12.* Combined city Beginning Teachers' relationship with their students after three terms of teaching.



*Figure 4.13.* Combined country Beginning Teachers’ relationship with their students after three terms of teaching.

### **The Main Tensions Faced by ECTs and Suggestions made after Three Terms of Teaching**

The ECTs were asked in the survey (Appendix L), “What tensions or problems did you find in your first six months of teaching?” The answers revealed the most common areas tended to cluster around three domains:

1. Emotions associated with stressful situations – assessment and reporting; staff relationships; parent meetings; behaviour management (50.00%)
2. Understanding of policies and procedures (33.33 %);
3. Other – Permanency; ICT; curriculum; students’ perceptions of teacher (16.67%)

These are now considered individually and followed by suggestions of how the mentoring experience might be improved for ECTs.



**1. Emotions associated with stressful situations – assessment and reporting; staff relationships; parent meetings; behaviour management.**

The factors that form this cluster are significant as they are raised by half of all participants. Much of the concern was related to the personal experiences of ECTs during the emotional roller-coaster experienced around Reporting and Assessment time. Two ECTs' comments from focus group interviews (Appendix M & N) best described these tensions. One stated, "Overload of work simply because I am doing it for the first time" **{Participant 6}**; and the other added, "Reporting time was terrible as we didn't get any assistance and it was very stressful" **{Participant 3}**. Perhaps, this burden could be alleviated by a system-wide directive to principals advising them to allocate their ECTs a set amount of extra-planning time with a mentor around reporting time, as has been suggested by Sullivan and Morrison (2014). In terms of staff relationships and parent meetings, it was reported that stress arose at times of hyper-activity and increased expectations to perform, as the following two responses from focus group questions (Appendix M & N) show,

For myself, third term as a PE [Physical Education] teacher, as that's when I run all the carnivals and when I'm more stress, like right now **{Participant 2}**

You need that emotional support when you're feeling a bit stresses and a little bit down and overwhelmed **{Participant 3}**

Behaviour management tended to be commented upon by mentors to a lesser degree in March (17.24%, Q16, Appendix K) than in August (54.55%, Q16, Appendix L). It is unlikely this suggests that management is getting worse as the year progresses but rather, that an understanding of the need for effective control has been impressed upon ECTs and this has lead to seeking evermore effective strategies. It can be assumed that classroom control improves with experience and hopefully, with the input of mentors. Nevertheless, some

students found this area quite challenging and stressful and were pleased to have a mentor to whom they could turn for advice, as the following focus group interview comments reveal,

It's been helpful to discuss behaviour management with my mentor... **{Participant 14}**.

It's really important to get feedback on classroom management strategies. **{Participant 21}**.

The literature is clear that problems with classroom management can cause immense stress if not resolved. One author writes that difficulty with class control can produce levels of stress “so severe that they have been linked to the battle fatigue experienced by soldiers in combat” (Charles, 1989, p. 4.). ECTs who have effective mentors might have a better chance of securing control of their classes early and so obviate experiencing the debilitating effects of stress and eventual burnout.

## **2. Understanding of policies and procedures.**

This concern was raised by one-third of participants. Issues seemed to revolve around two aspects, one to do with the school and the other with policies and procedures more broadly. With regard to the former, with one ECT's experience encapsulated what was shown to be a more broadly applicable perspective. She commented in the focus group interviews,

I think at my school not having a mentor I wasn't as well informed probably for us just like the policies of the school and different things like even where to stand on duty and that area and what's the first step if something goes wrong. We don't have a really set policy and it wasn't defined like to me. We have these orange slips and I didn't know when I first came until quite a while, what they were for. **{Participant 2}**

Such lack of information may have been alleviated with the support of effective mentoring, with Heikkinen, (2012) and Woolfolk (1987) making the observation that mentors are invaluable in assisting new-comers to a school with understanding school protocols. It must be remembered though, that some two-thirds of ECTs had positive experiences relating to their understanding of policies and procedures. Such a figure suggests that the majority of

principals did cater for ECTs' information needs, possibly via a mentoring or induction program.

The other area of concern revolved around documentation to do with the teaching profession more broadly. Areas requiring greater clarification related to the TRBWA; Religious Education Accreditation; and the APTS, as the following responses from focus group interviews (Appendix M) indicate,

The mentoring process has allowed me to talk about what professional development needs to be done in order to complete my accreditation, to move forward with my WACOT [now TRBWA] registration and to further my knowledge and understanding in different areas. **{Participant 1}**.

Yes, the mentee as well as the mentor needs some type of role with duties, (just to give them some kind of direction). I didn't realise the important role that they played in some of this um... TRBWA registration, coming into class and that sort of stuff...I need to approach my mentor with more issues ...yeah I think. **{Participant 2}**.

In the Catholic Education system the emphasis is more on your Catholic Education Accreditation, I'm going back home overseas next year and will not be in the Catholic system. To me it feels like that's the bit that is really harped on about, when the actual [TRBWA] registration is the bit that is important to me. **{Participant 3}**.

Explaining what requirements are needed and when they need to be completed, during your early years of teaching. Explaining what units at university link with the [Religious Education] Accreditation requirements. **{Participant 15}**.

Our mentor comes in [regarding] the Australian Professional Standards for Teaching. You have to choose one that we wanted to look at and move from graduate to proficient, then she did sort of an appraisal, like sort of an assessment for all staff, not just us, for everyone she came in and said right this was your standard, have you achieved it? **{Participant 4}**.

Yes, ours was similar to that. We had to choose 3 sections to work on **{Participant 2}**.

The suggestion is made that the creation of a more user friendly system-based documentation repository that includes relevant policy and procedural information for ECTs would be useful to ECTs. The site might include information such as: School/CEOWA policies and

procedures, and Religious Education Accreditation; with hyperlinks being made to relevant organisations such as AITSL (APTS) and the TRBWA.

### **3. Other – Permanency; ICT; curriculum; students’ perceptions of teacher.**

The lack of feedback provided to some ECTs regarding permanency was described by one ECT after six months of teaching in a country school, “Yep we have to apply for our jobs again” {Participant 3}. Such a despondent-sounding remark seems to suggest that the ECT is unaware of the process of seeking permanency or why certain procedures are in place around the issue of permanency. Mentors and school leaders alike may need to impress upon the ECT that a temporary position in a school is a wonderful opportunity to gain experience and create an impression that is more likely to lead to securing a permanent position. Further investigation, is warranted to explore the impact of temporary and permanent status on the psyche of ECTs and whether such has an impact on job satisfaction and career aspirations.

At the present time there are no system-wide guidelines for mentors or principals to appraise an ECTs’ permanency, using APST standards. What is significant is that APST standards were incorporated into the CEOWA’s former Early Career Teacher program which was trialled between 2013 and 2016. Unfortunately, the program’s outcomes were not effectively communicated to either school mentors or principals. For any future program, APST coverage might involve ECTs writing a report of their professional learning against the APST standards, to be shared with their principal. At the researcher’s present school the role of mentoring coordinator was created to liaise with an ECT in the planning of documentation, which assists the ECT with the ongoing process of facilitating teacher registration and permanency.

The other three areas – curriculum, ICT and students’ perceptions of teacher – only received cursory comment in the focus group interview comments but are worth relaying as they provide some indication of the nature of the concerns raised,

I have students with special needs and I had to create a learning assistant's plan and the teacher in year 4 [mentor] helped me **{Participant 15}**

It's good to have a mentor...to share ideas, ideas resources and skills...and to vent frustrations **{Participant 19}**

the large learning curve of using ICT in the classroom – a lot more than unit prepared us for **{Participant 15}**

One of the problems I've found is integrating and monitoring the use of ICT **{Participant 16}**

Worrying what the students thought about me **{Participant 15}**

I got my kids to rate each term and comment what it was like first term and they'd say, this in every single class, "sir you're really nice." Second term your middle run, you're alright... "Sir you've changed!" Third term... like "not a cool teacher anymore". **{Participant 3}**

Comments such as these indicate that ECTs have very real concerns, that they are willing to persevere, and that mentors are invaluable in helping them negotiate their way through difficulties. Some of the ECTs suggestions for improving the mentoring experience are now considered.

### **ECT Suggestions, after three terms of teaching, for improving the mentoring experience.**

ECTs made practical suggestions for negotiating some of the tensions cited above. In the open-ended survey question (Appendix L) they were asked, "Do you think your mentoring experience may be improved at your school? If so, how?". The following suggestions were made,

- the designation "mentor" based on a willingness to mentor;
- schedule mentor/mentee time;
- the availability of a structured mentoring program;
- handbook for Beginning Teachers;
- opportunities to network;
- reintroduce something similar to the trial ECT program;
- the use of both formal written and verbal feedback to assist ECTs' teaching;

- clear explanation of the implications of the APST and TRB by their mentor;
- clear explanation of important CEOWA documentation; and
- the need to match mentors to mentees for fulltime/part-time and temporary/permanent ECTs, as required.

One ECT proffered how invaluable time with a mentor was,

Those conversations are one of the best parts about being a first year, because you can turn to someone in frustration after reading an email and you can turn around to someone who teaches that same child and just be like, what to do, and they say well have you tried this... with a whole ring of suggestions... and the rest of the office will just chime in and suddenly you have a whole playbook of stuff that you can try!

Although suggestions for improving the mentoring experience were made, the majority (Table 4.6) acknowledged the benefits of mentoring, with such a view also finding support in the literature (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2004; Butler, Dickinson & Pittard, 2003; Boreen et al., 2009; Dobbins, Mitchell & Murray, 1998; Freeman-Loftis, 2011; Nakamura et al., 2009). Given such strong affirmation for mentoring, system-wide and school-based support is warranted.

#### **Subsidiary Question Four**

##### **What perceptions regarding mentoring do new graduates hold at the commencement of their teaching career?**

The fourth question to be addressed involved the perceptions of mentoring by ECTs in their first term of teaching. The mixed methods analysis (Table 4.13, QUAN + QUAL) identified as important five descriptors from Phase 2 of the CEOWA focus group interviews and survey data. The five descriptors were: Descriptor 1: Personal Expectations; Descriptor 10: Mentor Characteristics and Assistance; Descriptor 13: Mentoring Programs and Experiences; Descriptor 14: Group Aspirations; and Descriptor 16: Emotions during the Mentoring Experience, each of which received a QUAN + QUAL score of 100%.

ECTs identified their own personal expectations (descriptor 1) as important when developing their relationship with a mentor, with some ECTs raising certain types of feedback as being beneficial to a mentoring relationship. Feedback from mentors was identified as significant in survey and focus group interviews through the following descriptors: Mentor Characteristics (descriptor 10, Table 4.5) and Mentoring Programs and Experiences (descriptor 13, Table 4.5). The ECTs' aspirations of mentoring (descriptor 14: Table 4.13) highlighted a strong desire to continue to improve their own teaching whilst engaged in professional learning. The importance of a mentor to assist an ECT with their Personal Emotions (descriptor 16, Table 4.5) in negotiating tasks such as report writing, permanency and classroom management expectations, was also raised. Two other descriptors mentioned by ECTs were: Descriptor 4: Leadership Expectations and Descriptor 15: Personal Aspirations (Table 4.13). The importance of Leaders in mentoring was supported via focus group interview data and often involved addressing the personal aspirations of ECTs and discussing what may be termed life skills. The manner in which assistance was offered was also seen as being crucial. The assistance given by leadership personnel helped many ECTs settle into a new environment, especially for some country ECTs who were away from home for the first time.

The investigation (Table 4.13) of ECT descriptors 10 (Mentor Characteristics) and 13 (Mentoring Programs) revealed feedback from a mentor as a significant influence on an ECT's development, as outlined by the following participant comments:

I really did need some extra help and they were always there when I needed them {**Beginning Teacher 1**}.

Helped to enjoy teaching rather than spending majority of the time stressed out or concerned {**Beginning Teacher 2**}.

How to deal with different situations, parents and kids {**Beginning Teacher 3**}.

Continuous improvement {**Beginning Teacher 4**}.

Develop great classroom management skills **{Beginning Teacher 5}**.

Assessment has become meaningful **{Beginning Teacher 6}**.

Given me ideas. Given me focus areas to hone in on which helped me master things I was not good at **{Beginning Teacher 7}**.

The principles of feedback raised in the literature review by McNally and Oberski (2003), Hudson, Skamp and Brook's (2005), and Jensen and Reichel (2012), emphasised a mentor-training program that provided targeted feedback to enhance an ECT's progress. Feedback and the way in which it is presented encompasses far more than simply training mentees but more tacitly, adds to the creation of a school culture. Hargreaves and Fullan (2001) observed that isolated innovation is nowhere near as productive as,

becoming an integrated part of broader improvement efforts to reculture our schools and school systems... The goal is not to create high quality mentor programs as ends in themselves but rather to incorporate mentoring as part of transforming teaching into a true learning profession (p. 5).

The prospect of some ECTs receiving adequate feedback from a mentor while others are not, raises four possible mentoring scenarios for an ECT. These scenarios are used as sub-headings to explore the perceptions of mentoring experienced by ECTs at the commencement of their career.

### **Scenario 1. The ECT isn't Assigned a Mentor.**

The March/April ECT surveys (Appendix K) revealed that only 13.33% of ECTs were without the benefit of a mentor. However, a further 20% of ECTs stipulated their school was without any type of mentoring support. Those who had little support during their first term experienced a sense of isolation, as evidenced by several focus group interview responses,

I would love for my mentor teacher to come and watch me teach... because after prac we were getting feedback after like every lesson, everything that we did everything we did and every programme everything! Whereas now



we've gone from getting total feedback to nothing and you just don't know!  
{Participant 11}

You've gone from that environment [referring to the internship] where you are being graded and you put so much work in and then you go to an environment [current school] where you're "all good. {Participant 9}

The principal survey data substantiated the perceptions of the ECTs but was even more dire in terms of the lack of mentor support being provided. Principals (31%) revealed that no mentor had been allocated to an ECT and 21% reported their school was without a mentoring program. The benefits of the regular mentor feedback previously experienced by most CUWA internship students in Phase 1 of the study, may be slowly eroded for them as ECTs, in the absence of continuing mentorship.

The provision and benefit of mentor feedback was explored through two survey questions asked of ECTs (Question 7 and 8, Table 4.15). The first question, Question 7, asked, "How does your school provide feedback to you about your teaching?" The method of feedback and ranking of the top three responses from participants was as follows,

1. Through my mentor (70 %),
2. By the principal (40%), and
3. By an assistant principal (30 %)

Such information suggests that the mentor is seen as the most valuable support person for the novice. School leaders ought not to be discounted, however, as they to are seen as significant in terms of providing feedback, especially in the area of classroom management and school procedures (Table 4.7). Survey Question 8 (Appendix L) asked, "Is the majority of feedback pertaining to your understanding of: Teaching and Learning; School Procedures; Classroom Management; Religious Education Teaching; Faith Issues and Developing Better Interpersonal Skills?" Responses are provided in Figure 4.14.

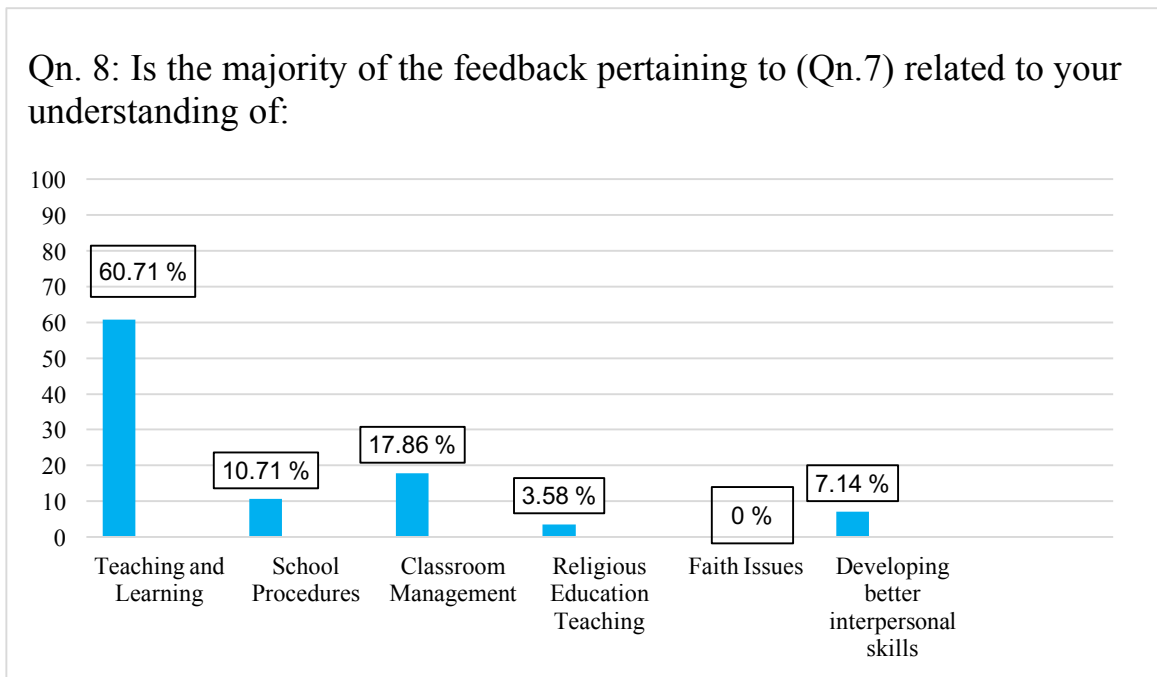


Figure 4.14. Main areas of feedback provided to Beginning Teachers.

On the basis of Figure 4.14, the ECTs responded positively regarding the importance of teaching and learning feedback (60.71%). Feedback in classroom management, however, was significantly lower in first term (17.86%) than in third term (56.76%), as one might expect on the basis of greater experience and stronger relationship formation with the students. In the areas of Religious Education and Faith Issues, the feedback received was minimal, which is understandable where no mentor is available. The interpersonal skill set also scored low, perhaps due to lack of confidence as a new teacher, the overwhelming realization of what was required of a new graduate, and perhaps lack of mentor support to help facilitate the development of these skills.

**Scenario 2. The ECT Initially is Assigned a Mentor, however, the Relationship becomes Fractured or Non-existent.**

Initially most ECTs involved in the study began their career with a mentor (86.67%, March/April ECT survey data, Appendix K). For some however, this relationship appeared to deteriorate, usually for one of two reasons:

1. The ECTs' focus group interview responses indicated a lack of assigned mentoring time. Principals (Survey, Appendix J) also suggested that over 46% of schools hadn't established allotted times for mentoring with only 14% of principals allocating any regular mentoring time; and
2. The mentor transferred within or departed from an organisation. In some cases, the mentor was not replaced, causing ECTs to approach other staff members, originally not assigned as their mentor. Three participants commented about such a relationship in the focus group interviews,

We were talking to the guy once again who is in the same office and he's been really helpful to us and he said as well that he didn't understand why it was the heads of learning area, because it is all the heads of learning area, who are doing the mentoring. He said it really should be just a teacher who is in that same area as you that is nominated for it [mentoring], which is what I think we would all appreciate **{Beginning Teacher 1}**.

Well, my mentor is leaving in 2 weeks so then I'm done for the next term. **{Beginning Teacher 2}**.

Is L [name] any one's mentor? Because all of us have probably got more out of this individual person who is a mid-layer staff. He is a subject coordinator but he's not a head of department or a senior or anything like that, but he's probably given us more support across the board than any other person. **{Beginning Teacher 3}**.

Mentor stability is a particularly knotty problem as it inevitable that individuals will move within or out of the CEOWA system. It is even more difficult in country schools where mobility is far higher. One principal expressed frustration at not being able to source mentors with the comment,

What would be really nice would be someone who has been a graduate for two years, then does a secondment for a couple of years in a country school. They've got all that experience to say this is what it is like come up and do some mentoring for someone who is starting. **{Principal 2}**

The appointment of an external mentor, such as a retired teacher or teacher on maternity leave who resides in the district, may alleviate the discontinuity in

mentor support. Such a person may also be perceived as being “more distant” and hence possibly less threatening than a permanent teacher from within the school.

**Scenario 3. The Feedback Provided to ECTs is more Informal in Nature.**

The third point raised by some ECTs in focus group interviews was that mentoring support in schools was informal and lacking structure. The identification of an informal or even laissez-faire approach to mentoring was reported by two city primary ECTs,

Well I didn't have a mentor until only about two or three weeks ago and its fine because all the teachers are amazing and they've all been helping me out its all good-but there would never be the one teacher, I would be going to for everything and now there is **{Participant 1}**.

Well, I don't think it was officially said oh I am your Mentor! I think we just kind of assumed the other year three teacher, so it was more or less like a buddy, which is really helpful because they've been doing it for so long and I'm quite new into it, so that's been really helpful and ...I just feel bad and I guess I'm often asking and I guess having other graduates there to help each other is a good thing **{Participant 8}**.

One survey question asked of principals (Appendix I), “Do you have an appointed staff member who supervises the mentoring of Beginning Teachers?” Results showed that 32% of principals indicated that they had no such person. It may be the case that some schools without a formal mentoring program and/or mentoring coordinator are relying on “buddy teachers” offering informal mentoring support to ECTs. Even though the importance of informal mentoring has been highlighted as a major reason for developing sustained mentoring relationships (Buchanan, Raffaele, Glozier and Kanagaratnam, 2016), it is less desirable than an assigned mentor because of the formality that assignment brings to the mentoring process.

**Scenario 4. The ECT is Provided with Formal Mentoring Feedback and is Positively Influenced by the Attributes of the Mentor.**

The importance of a mentor's attributes was raised by ECTs in both the surveys (Appendix K & L) and focus group interviews (Appendix M & N). Several ECTs in the focus group interviews remarked:

I think more emotionally and socially my mentor has been really good in terms of I don't have any family in the country so she's really looked after me and seeing what I'm doing on the weekends and you know, just being there as a friend as well as a staff member while at school. It's good she's my mentor. **{Beginning Teacher 5}**.

It's great. It helps me out, it's just someone I can go to. **{Beginning Teacher 12}**.

Although relationships such as those expressed above are positive and ought to be welcomed, mention must however be made of the fact that it is possible for a mentor to get too close to mentee and be too involved with them. The following quotes, without realizing it, may be signaling such a danger,

My mentor is awesome and he took my class and he does things... here is my phone number, my email... that really helped me and like he is right into it, helps take the class and that's a lot of help **{Beginning Teacher 16}**.

I have become great friends with my mentor and she has been there to listen to everything I have to say and has supported me the whole way through my first year. **{Beginning Teacher 3}**.

With regard to potential over-involvement with a mentee, appropriate mentor training would potentially obviate such a problem from occurring. In reply to the open-ended survey (Appendix L) question "How has mentoring assisted you with your teaching?", ECTs offered the following responses,

My mentor has definitely assisted my progress as they are always willing to listen to me whether it is about a parent issue or I need advice on how to deal with a concern in my classroom. She is approachable, caring and a good listening. She has a huge amount of classroom experience, which means she

has seen almost everything that could happen in the classroom so she has a huge amount of advice and guidance that she can give me. I like the fact that I am able to talk to her about most things with regards to what is happening either in my classroom or in the school. **{Beginning Teacher 1}**.

I thought that he introduced to me things that I had never been taught at uni and that's the main thing, that the mentor teacher shows you what real life is like...uni they try, but prac is where you learn everything.  
**{Beginning Teacher 2}**.

A significant attribute of mentors recognised by ECTs was the provision of honest feedback. The importance of feedback, as a key indicator in the development of the mentoring relationship, was indicated by the majority of respondents (66.67%, Table 4.6) However, 40% (Table 4.8) of ECTs observed that they had received little benefit from their mentor's feedback. Possibly, this indicates that the type of feedback provided by some mentors was not sufficient to sustain the ongoing professional development requirements of ECTs.

### **Subsidiary Question Five**

#### **What perceptions do principals have of how mentoring is conceived of in a Catholic school?**

The fifth question to be answered involved principals' perceptions of how mentoring was currently being understood in Catholic Schools. The mixed methods analysis undertaken identified ten descriptors from Phase 3 of the principal focus group interviews and survey data (Table 4.17) that were important for mentoring in a Catholic school. The ten descriptors highlighted were: Descriptor 1: Personal Expectations; Descriptor 4: Leadership Expectations; Descriptor 6: Catholic Education System Expectations; Descriptor 8: National Expectations; Descriptor 10: Mentor Characteristics and assistance; Descriptor 11: City v Country Issues; Descriptor 13: Mentoring Programs and Experiences; Descriptor 15:

Personal Aspirations re mentoring; Descriptor 16: Emotions during the Mentoring Experience; and Descriptor 17: Assistance for Leadership in Mentor training.

Table 4.17

*Mixed method Descriptors and their Identification for the Principal Phase of the Study*

		Concept/Theme descriptor								
QUAN + QUAL Phases (n = 33)		1. Personal Expectations	2. Parental Expectations	3. Staff Expectations	4. Principal & Leadership	5. University Expectations	6. Catholic Education Expectations	7. State Expectations	8. National Expectations	9. School/ Parish Interactions
Note <sup>1</sup> Quantitative	Descriptor Total (/ 1)	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	1	0 <sup>1</sup>
Note <sup>2</sup> Qualitative	Descriptor Total (/ 1)	1	0	0	1	1	1	0	1	1 <sup>2</sup>
Note <sup>3</sup> QUAN <sup>1</sup> + QUAL <sup>2</sup>	TOTAL (/2)	2	0	1	2	1	2	1	2	1 <sup>3</sup>
TOTAL ( % )		100	0	50	100	50	100	50	100	50 %

Table 4.17 (Cont'd.)

QUAN + QUAL Phases  (n = 33)	Concept/Theme descriptor									
	10. Mentor Characteristics	11. City vis-à-vis Country	12. Professional Development Programs	13. Mentoring Programs	14. Group Aspirations re mentoring	15. Personal Aspirations re mentoring	16. Emotions during the mentoring experience	17. Leadership Mentor Training	18. Mentoring opportunities & Interactions	
Note <sup>1</sup> Quantitative Descriptor Total (/ 1)	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	0 <sup>1</sup>	
Note <sup>2</sup> Qualitative Descriptor Total (/ 1)	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1 <sup>2</sup>	
Note <sup>3</sup> QUAN <sup>1</sup> + QUAL <sup>2</sup> TOTAL (/ 2)	2	2	1	2	1	2	2	2	1 <sup>3</sup>	
TOTAL ( % )	100	100	50	100	50	100	100	100	50 %	

The identification of the ten descriptors by principals that were important for mentoring in a Catholic school suggested that mentoring was affected by factors such as regional isolation, a lack of suitable mentors, inadequate access to technology, contractual arrangements for ECTs, budgetary constraints and a lack of system-provided professional development. To investigate principals' perceptions of mentoring, a total of 32 principals were surveyed, with sixteen participating in a follow-up focus group interviews. To determine the current perceptions of principals toward mentoring, one focus group interview question asked, "What current CEOWA mentoring programs were offered for leaders to meet the needs of ECTs?" Several principals commented on the apparent lack of system-based support,

Not confident in answering this question {Principal 14}.



I have one of my three graduates who are attending the CEOWA leadership program. He says that the collegiality he is developing helps him feel a part of the system but he gets more practical help from the senior teacher who is his mentor here at school {**Principal 13**}.

Zero. If it's not for your own network or your Principal Association or / Principal Advisor, we piggy back on hearing good ideas at PD [Professional Development], for instance, I might send someone down i.e.: my deputy to the Beginning Teachers' trial, we are happy to do it and do more than some schools. {**Secondary, Principal 1**}.

Zero. {**Principal 5**}.

Over the times there has been a number several two-hour sessions for new teachers that has come through [from the CEOWA], with a lot of new teachers going from the country between two and four [and this] is not really a possibility {**Principal 8**}.

It will be interesting to see now, as my school has been fortunate enough to access those video regional conference facilities, so it will be interesting to see how that may be able to piggy back up on that PD using the technology. {**Secondary, Principal 1**}.

At the present time in Catholic schools there is no formal expectation for a school to offer a mentoring program as part of the Induction process, yet, the literature views mentoring as critical not only for Induction but for the ongoing development of an ECT professionally (McNally & Oberski, 2003; Hudson, Skamp & Brooks, 2005; Jensen & Reichel 2011). Wong (2001) further observed, "...mentors are often an integral part of the training process, resulting in a more consistent implementation of the district's or school's vision for effective teaching" (p. 1).

Two survey questions (Appendix I) asked principals how they catered for the mentoring of their ECTs during their first year of teaching:

- Q15. Does your school have a policy/procedure for Beginning Teachers? and
- Q3. Who at your school provides feedback to a Beginning Teacher?

Regarding question 15, principals indicated that the provision of system-based guidelines for mentoring, together with assistance for establishing school procedures, as being the most

potentially beneficial to an ECTs development. Several principals from focus group interviews responded as follows,

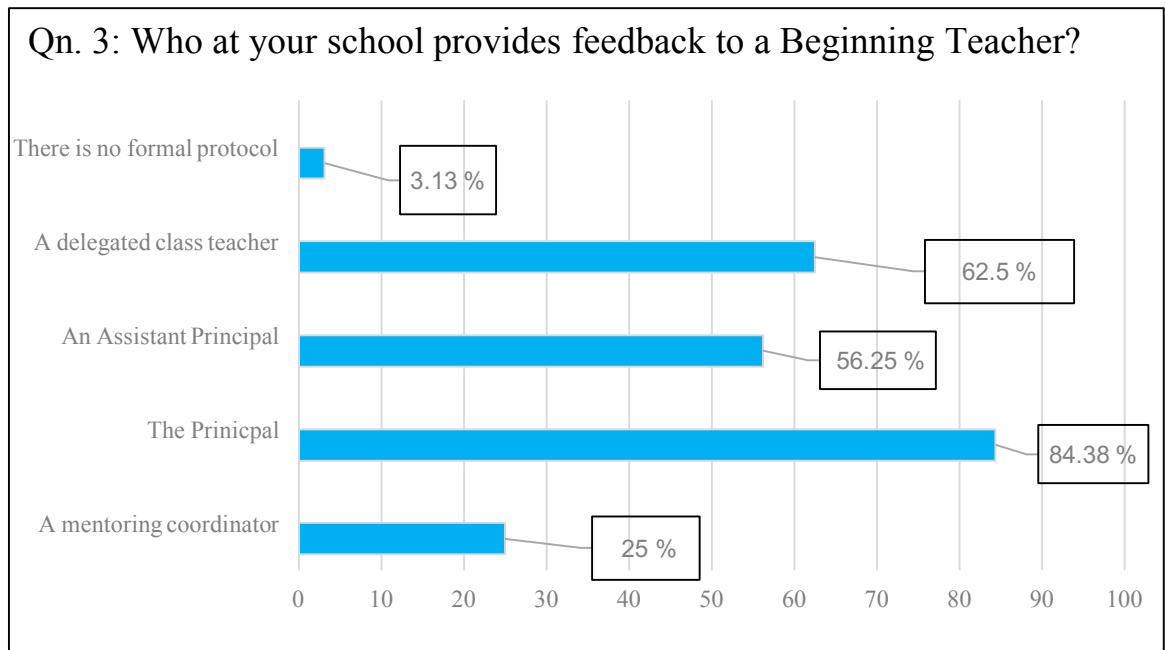
We have a very thorough program whereby the Beginning Teacher is assigned a mentor teacher straight away. We give both teachers time out of class to meet and set in motion a plan to meet all TRB requirements. He or she also makes time to go into class and observe the teaching. He or she looks closely at the programs of work, record keeping, daily work program and communication with families. Additional to the work of this mentor teacher, we use another key teacher. She has one day out of her own class every Thursday and she goes into each of our Beginning Teachers' classrooms. She co-teaches with them. Generally, the Beginning Teacher & this teacher have discussed the particular aspect of teaching that will be focused upon. **{Principal 13}**

Nice to have a Framework, would be a great guide to develop in your school context. To have a framework would be a great guide for a start. **{Principal 2}**

Yes, because ultimately these graduates with experience are going to move across the system and you'd like a level playing field and you would like to at least think they have received at least similar mentoring in their previous school to evaluate them. **{Principal 3}**

The last PD [Professional Development] days at the end of year we have the new staff come and I have the time to facilitate where I am not pulled from the phone etc. I use it to cover a lot of those aspects and also set a couple of class contexts and handover the information from the previous teachers and so on... so, I am building on so that the new teacher can have the time to talk about their professional learning and so on and a little bit of work on the Australia Professional Standards for Teaching standards. **{Principal 5}**

Question 3 from the Principal Survey asked, "Who at your school provides feedback to a Beginning Teacher?" Figure 4.15 clearly indicates that the principals see themselves as providing the majority of the feedback to ECTs. Whether the principal taking the greater share of ECT support responsibility is desirable, especially when a mentor coordinator is available, is considered in the following chapter.



*Figure 4.15.* Principal survey responses on who provided feedback to Beginning Teachers.

(Participants ranked several sources of feedback, hence the reason some participants identified more than one source of feedback and why the total number when added is over 100%).

Question 4 of the principals’ survey (Appendix I) asked, “Is the majority of this feedback [i.e. as related to Question 3] related to the Beginning Teachers’ understanding of the following topics... .” The topics together with the responses, are detailed in Table 4.18.

Table 4.18

*Principals’ Response Regarding Feedback Focus*

Identifier	Category	%
1	Teaching and Learning	63.64
2	Classroom Management	15.15
3	Effective communication strategies	12.12
4	School Procedures	9.09
5	Religious Education and Faith Issues	0.00
	Total	100.00

The highest ranked area by far was teaching and learning, claiming almost two-thirds of a principal's attention (Table 4.8). This is to be expected, for as McDonald (2013) highlights, this is the area that is "essential to engage student learning" (p. 4). McDonald also stated the second most important area is classroom management, so it is not surprising that this area is ranked second, although only by a slim margin from communication skills. Given that ECTs had indicated in focus group interviews (Appendix M & N) that school procedures needed greater attention, the low score of 9.09% suggests that principals need to give this area greater attention.

Of particular interest for Catholic educators is the lack of feedback from principals in the areas of Religious Education and Faith Issues. In some cases, principals chose to delegate this role in a primary school to an assistant principal (56%, Figure 4.15). The delegation of this responsibility for feedback to other key leaders acknowledges the importance of Religious Education. Conversely, given the principals' keen interest in teaching and learning, such delegation may indicate the low level of priority that principals assign to Religious Education and Faith Issues. As Crotty (1998) stated in relation to the role of Assistant Principals and Religious Education Coordinators in assisting principals,

Undoubtedly, this [RE & Faith Issues] comes from the great commitment of the individual RECs as well as their awareness of the many challenges facing Catholic schools. Yet the management of these challenges remains one of the most critical factors for effective Catholic school leadership today (p. 7).

Survey question 11 (Appendix I) asked, "What types of strategies do you utilize with a Beginning Teacher in their first weeks of teaching?" Responses indicated that during the first weeks of the teaching year, principals employed numerous strategies and programs to provide feedback to an ECT (Figure 4.16).

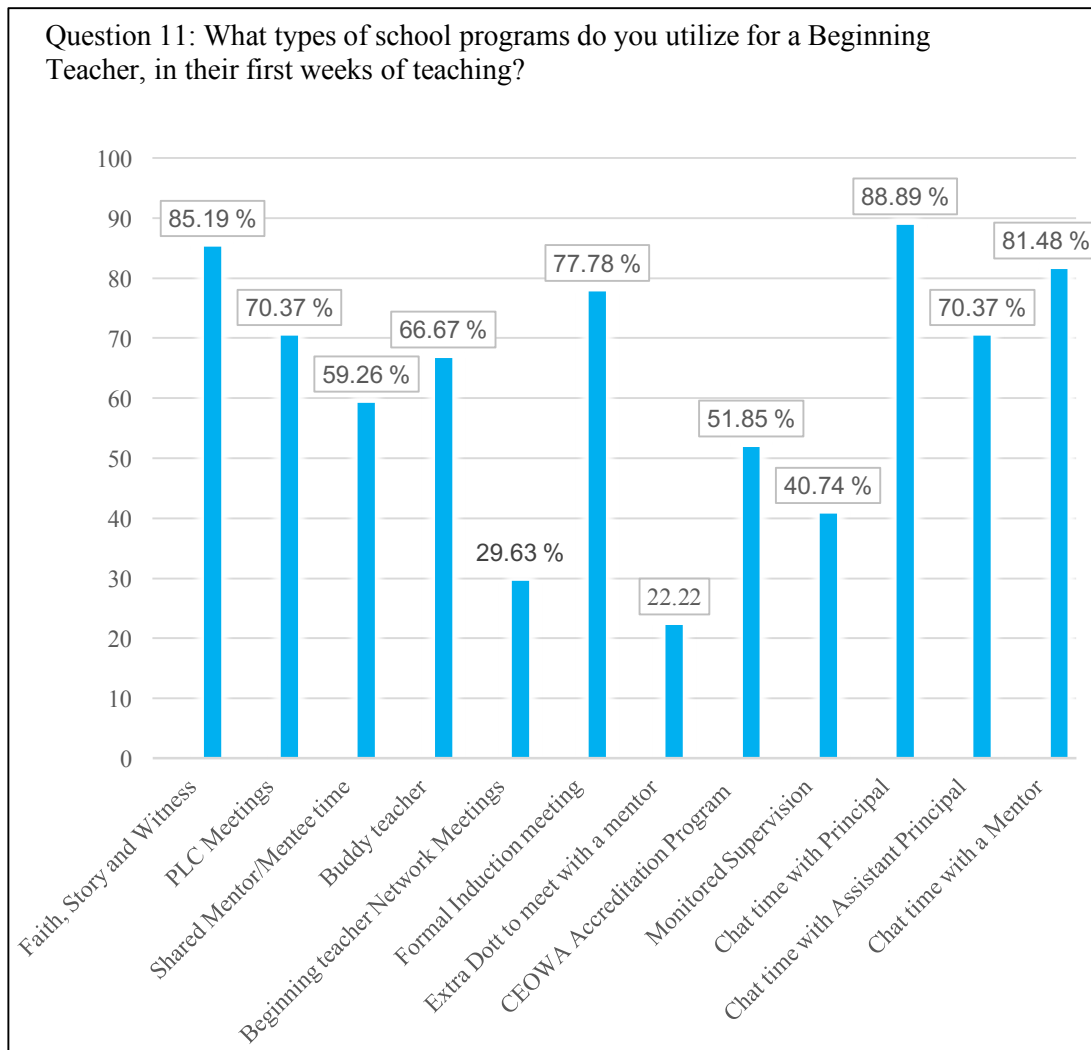


Figure 4.16. Types of support provided to Beginning Teachers in their first weeks of teaching.

(Participants ranked multiple strategies, hence the total number, when added, is over 100%).

It should be remembered that as the information presented in Figure 4.16 is a composite of the principals' responses, not all strategies and programs are utilized by all principals. Nevertheless, the four that received the highest overall ranking require comment. Informal chat time (89%) is the highest ranked strategy in the principals' arsenal. This may indicate that principals prefer informal to formal dialogue with their ECTs. It may also suggest, however, that being busy people, principals only have time for more ad hoc dialogue. Second was the mandated program *Faith, Story and Witness*, originally prepared by CEOWA in 2004, and consisting of The Religious Knowledge and Faith content of the Faith,

Story and Witness six-hour program. It is encouraging to see principals (85%), reporting the use of this program but its importance does not seem to have been translated to ECTs (16.13%, response to Q16, Appendix K). Third is the use of a formal Induction Program (77.78%) but the importance of which the ECTs ranked far lower than principals (45.16%, Q16, Appendix K). This may be the result of ECTs not appreciating the importance of induction or principals not appropriately identifying the perceived needs of an ECT early in the year. Further investigation is also required to ascertain why close to one quarter of principals offer no such program. It may in fact be the case that a preference for less formal approaches is preferred.

In an attempt to recruit and retain ECTs in country areas, some principals used a form of “social mentoring” to ensure that ECTs were made welcome and were able to overcome perceived obstacles, such as living arrangements. The following insights from focus group interviews (Appendix J) are illuminating in this regard,

It’s, also in living, I mean I had to go with one teacher and teach him how to stock up his fridge and you know what sort of things you need to buy as he had been with mum the whole time, even the pizza delivery guy knew where his classroom was and I just said to him mate this has to stop otherwise you’ll be a size 20 by the time you go back to Perth, we needed to talk about how you stock the fridge and get some easy cook meals. My husband was shocked that I could provide that (Laughter) but You do go beyond the call of duty. **{Principal 1}**

It is true you get some staff who have lived by themselves in Perth. I’ve got one staff member who didn’t even know how to make their own bed that’s a parenting issue (laughter) . But they don’t drive either, they’ve smashed 6 cars at home before heading to the country and their parents are saying you’re not to getting on the road, so what do you do for PD – it’s a legitimate...for a young girl going 4 hours on her own so it’s a real issue for your regional schools. We had a staff member have an accident on coming back from PD just recently, it’s a real issue for regional schools. **{Principal 5}**

In summary, given the uniqueness of each mentoring relationship within a school community, each school principal might benefit from having system-based guidelines for

informing school-based procedures for mentoring. Such guidelines might advantage not only principals but also ECTs and mentors in the creation and execution of an effective and system-transportable mentoring program.

## **Chapter Summary**

This chapter has presented the findings for the study from the analysis of the Subsidiary Research Questions (Table 4.1). A brief summary, of some of these findings included:

- The CUWA students greatly benefitted from a more structured mentoring program;
- Some ECTs received adequate mentoring while others did not, which raised four possible mentoring scenarios for an ECT currently teaching in a Catholic School; and
- The role of principals in assisting ECTs with school-based mentoring programs is important, however, it could be greatly improved through the introduction of system mentoring guidelines.

The detailed analysis of the subsidiary questions investigated in this chapter involved separate mixed methods analysis (Tables 4.10, 4.13 & 4.17) for each of the three cohorts. The frequency of these descriptors, subsequently was converged for mixed methods analysis (Table 4.4). After the data was converged, four common theme descriptors were identified. These four descriptors were: descriptor 1, Personal Expectations; descriptor 10, Mentor Characteristics and assistance; descriptor 13, Mentoring Programs and Experiences; and descriptor 16 Emotions during Mentoring Experience (Table 4.5). It was found these four common descriptors are most significant for the proffering of a new mentoring framework, titled the Borromeo Mentoring Framework (BMF), which will be developed in the next chapter.

**CHAPTER 5**

**ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS OF**

**INTEGRATIVE RESEARCH QUESTION**

**Introduction**

In the previous chapter, data was presented to answer the five subsidiary questions posed at the beginning of the study. For ease of reference, these are re-presented:

- 1) Does participation in a mentoring program for Early Career Teachers affect their career aspirations?
- 2) What perceptions do CUWA Post-Internship (Pre-Service) teachers hold regarding mentoring prior to the commencement of their teaching career?
- 3) How have these graduate teacher perceptions of mentoring changed as a result of having been teaching for three school terms?
- 4) What perceptions regarding mentoring do new graduates hold at the commencement of their teaching career?
- 5) What perceptions do principals have of how mentoring is conceived of in a Catholic School?

The integrative question is now considered. The integrative question is not only a question in its own right, but by its very nature, forms the backbone of the research. As such, it is used to frame the present chapter, it reads, “On the basis of the subsidiary questions 1-5, what key principles, conclusions and recommendations underpin the development of a Pre-Service and Beginning Teacher mentoring framework?” What follows is structured in terms of the three components of the integrative question. First, in terms of establishing principles, nine key findings as these relate to the subsidiary questions are considered individually. Second, 10 conclusions drawn from the data relating to the subsidiary questions are presented. Third, recommendations for developing a mentoring framework are made and anchored to what has been identified as the Borromeo Mentoring Framework.



## **Principles for developing a Beginning Teachers' mentoring framework**

To answer the subsidiary questions, data was collected and presented in the previous chapter. From that data, ten principles could be identified. Table 5.1 presents the ten principles, shows the subsidiary question to which each relates, and indicates the cohort that found the principle to be significant. As can be seen from the Table, not all principles were relevant to all three cohorts. In many ways, this is to be expected as Pre-Service teachers, Early Career Teachers and principals will have different priorities depending upon their stage of career development and role in an educational organization. Such differentiation is seen as a strength rather than a deficit for two reasons. First, focusing on a particular set of principles at a particular stage of development allows the individual to be engaged with what is relevant to them at the time, and also makes engagement with mentoring more manageable. Second, between the three cohorts, all ten principles receive coverage, so cross-pollination may occur for any cohort for which a particular principle is not seen (at least currently) as being significant. The ten principles, which are then considered individually, are as follows:

1. Complying with regulatory documentation
2. Establishing the fundamentals of mentoring
3. Recognising mentor attributes
4. Understanding the need for feedback in mentoring
5. Adopting a system-wide mentoring approach
6. Facilitating a school-based mentoring approach
7. Interfacing with teacher education institutions
8. Mentoring and Religious Education
9. Mentoring in the city vis-à-vis the country
10. Generating employment security

Table 5.1

*Principles Identified in the Data Relating to Specific Subsidiary Questions and their Significance for each of the Three Cohorts Involved in the Study*

Identifier	Key principles identified from Subsidiary Questions	Principles related to subsidiary questions 1-5 data (as identified in Chapter 4)			✓ <sup>1</sup> Significance for:			
					CUWA	ECT	Principals	
1	Complying with regulatory documentation	1	3	5	✓		✓	
2	Establishing fundamentals of mentoring	2	4		✓		✓	
3	Recognising mentor attributes	1	2	3	4	✓	✓	✓
4	Understanding the need for feedback	1	3	5	✓	✓		
5	Adopting a system-based approach	3	4	5			✓	
6	Facilitating a school-based approach	3	4			✓	✓	
7	Interfacing with teacher education institutions	2	5		✓		✓	
8	Mentoring and Religious Education	2	3	5	✓ <sup>2</sup>		✓	
9	Mentoring in the City vis-à-vis the Country	2	3	5	✓	✓	✓	
10	Generating employment security	3	4			✓		
	TOTAL				6	4	7	

Notes:

<sup>1</sup> Ticks/checks represent significance of the principle as expressed by a particular cohort.

<sup>2</sup> This principle will only be significant for those CUWA students who are desirous of teaching in a Catholic school.

### **Principle 1: Complying with Regulatory Documentation.**

A pre-service teacher mentoring program is seen as highly desirable in the National School Improvement Tool ([NSIT], ACER, 2016) and the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers ([APST], AITSL, 2011). Such an initiative has long been identified as an important part of a school's induction process (Fiore & Whitaker, 2013; Ingersoll & Strong, 2004; Wong, 2001). Robust documentation, with the aim of better equipping pre-service teachers and the principals in whose schools they will complete their practicums, may signal

to pre-service teachers that peer involvement with their career aspiration is important. In the longer term, such documentation if acted upon, may also help to stem the significant teacher attrition that is occurring. An Australian study undertaken by AITSL (2015) found that, “For primary school teachers, 11 per cent of those teaching for one to two years considered an alternative career; however, this increased to 24 per cent for primary school teachers teaching between three to five years” (p. 2). By way of comparison, other countries have similar concerns. In a USA study, Brown (2015) found that,

New teachers who are assigned mentors are more likely to continue teaching than those who are not assigned mentors. In 2008-2009, 92 percent of those who had first-year mentors were still teaching, compared to 84 percent of those without mentors. By 2011-12, 86 percent of those who had first-year mentors were teaching, compared to 71 percent who did not have mentors (pp. 1-2).

Easing the transition from intern to ECT via the assistance of a mentor who has the backing of a government mandated program may be one effective way of retaining teachers in the workforce.

Principals involved in the study recognised the importance of mentoring. In fact, such a perspective was expressed through the recommendation of developing a system-wide approach. Principal insights from focus interview questions (Appendix J) included:

An outline of what support is offered, as a school to Beginning Teachers is important, as is I believe incorporating the graduating standards from AITSL [APST] into what we are doing in schools. **{Principal 14}**

I am building so that the new teacher can have the time to talk about their Professional Learning and so on and a little bit of work on the AITSL [APST] standards. **{Principal 10}**

In summary, a consensus from the principals’ responses revealed a disparity in the type of mentoring being offered to an ECT in a Catholic school. A major reason for this was the perceived lack of system-based guide-lines for the training of mentors and principals.

Principals, through the current Enterprise Bargaining Agreement (EBA), have minimal

guide-lines for including mentoring in induction processes. In fact, the present EBA states that there is an induction process offered for an ECT during their first year of teaching and that they will receive a written progress statement at the end of their third term of teaching. The agreement (Section 27) between the CEOWA and the Independent Education Union Western Australia, referred to the importance of the principal's role in induction as,

A teacher in his or her first year of teaching shall participate in an induction process of one year's duration, unless the teacher and the employer agree that the induction process shall continue for a further year. The induction process shall be under the terms and conditions already established to assist the teacher's professional development. The employer shall provide a written statement to the teacher one term before the end of the teacher's first year, outlining the teacher's progress and development. (CEOWA, 2015, p. 37)

On more of a system-based level, since 2015 the Executive Director of CEOWA has mandated that all Catholic schools create an Annual School Improvement Plan (ASIP) that addressed each of the NSIT recommendations. Using their ASIP as the vehicle, a school can implement a mentoring program, which would enable principals to assist ECTs in the completion of essential National, State and System-based requirements such as Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (APST); Quality Catholic School (QCS) requirements; TRBWA registration; and Accreditation to Teach Religious Education in Catholic Schools. One way of ensuring that such documents are complied with and that mentoring is progressing as intended would be to engage in periodic evaluation as part of an accountability mechanism.

### **Principle 2: Establishing the Fundamentals of Mentoring.**

The literature review identified 18 key theme descriptors (or simply, descriptors) pertaining to developing a framework for effective mentoring (Table 3.1). Once identified, these were tested against the three cohorts involved in the study – pre-service teachers, ECTs and principals. The subsequent analysis (Table 4.5) highlighted four descriptors as being

significant for all three cohorts, these being: Descriptor 1: Personal expectations; Descriptor 10: Mentor characteristics and assistance provided; Descriptor 13: Mentoring programs and experiences; Descriptor 16: Emotions during mentoring experience. Further nuanced from focus group interviews, these descriptors indicated how the mentoring of ECTs was affected by regional isolation; a lack of suitable mentors; inadequate access to technology; contractual arrangements for ECTs; budgetary constraints; and a lack of system-provided professional development (Appendix M & N).

It would appear from the above findings that in any dialogue around the fundamentals of mentoring, the following factors would need to be considered:

- Both mentor and mentee have certain expectations of each other – these need to be identified early in the relationship;
- There are certain characteristics of mentors that are desirable – this aspect is considered further under Principle 3;
- Mentoring programs that provide direct experiences – the place of praxis must be appreciated;
- An understanding that mentoring must encompass the affective as well as the cognitive domain – mentees require emotional support;
- Contextual factors need to be considered in mentoring – geographical location may be an important factor in mentoring success;
- Trained mentors can offer more than untrained mentors – although an informal mentoring relationship is better than no mentoring at all;
- Availability of relevant technology may make the task of mentoring easier – especially for those in remote locations;
- Mentees who have a more secure employment position may have greater commitment to a mentoring program – this matter is considered further under Principle 9.
- Without an adequate budget for release time, sourcing potential mentors may become problematic;
- System-based support for school-based mentoring is preferable to schools going it alone – discussed further under Principle 5.

Support from focus group interviews (Appendix H & J) indicates that matters relating to the above dot points are applicable to pre-service teachers as well as principals,

Coming into the prac, we had two Praccies [practicum students] so we got to have a whole staff lunch. It was good to get the other staff and with two other teachers in a triple stream school you got to know them. We had a wonderful system where emails would fly through and they just said I'd send you all my programs this term. That was really open as well, as the Year six team meeting twice a week at the beginning and end of the week you could talk with them about what was happening and cross mark [student work].  
**{CUWA Participant 1}**

I found the same thing with the triple stream. It was very easy to do your planning because the three of you had to work together. Everybody, well, one person would do programming and having that support there, is better for graduate teachers. **{CUWA Participant 2}**

There was the Beginning Teachers PD [Professional Development] at XXXX [school] and we had to bear the cost or find alternative strategies to manage the classes whilst those Beginning Teachers went to the PD  
**{Principal 4}**.

My school has been fortunate enough to access those video regional conference facilities, so it will be interesting to see how that may be able to piggy back up on that PD using the technology but that two hour PD is not enough. **{Principal 7}**.

I have one of my 3 graduates who are attending the CEOWA leadership program [The Trial ECT program]. He says that the collegiality he is developing helps him feel a part of the system but he gets more practical help from the senior teacher who is his mentor here at school. **{Principal 13}**.

Schools are busy places; teachers are busy people. Sometimes, remote schools have added pressures of staff turnover and the need to continuously have something in place for Beginning Teachers **{Principal 14}**

Establishing fundamentals is important, for as Coe, Aloisi, Higgins and Elliot-Major (2014) proffered, "... teachers working in schools with 'more supportive' professional environments continued to improve significantly after three years, while teachers in the least supportive schools actually declined in their effectiveness" (p. 42). A greater emphasis on fundamentals may obviate the need for patching up at a later date a poorly thought out mentoring framework and subsequent program.

### **Principle 3: Recognising Mentor Attributes.**

Table 5.1 indicates that the above principle is the only one that seems to have direct significance for participants in all three cohorts. As such, it needs to be at the forefront of any mentoring framework and subsequent program. A conclusion of the study was that the guarantee of a mentor may not alleviate all of the problems faced by an ECT. However, a mentor with the following attributes is highly likely to provide an ECT with professional security, stability and satisfaction:

- Advanced Pedagogical skills;
- Understanding of current educational issues;
- Honesty;
- Willingness and ability to provide meaningful feedback;
- Emotional Intelligence (empathy); and
- Content knowledge.

Two of the CUWA students personally observed some these mentor attributes in operation:

Someone who is able to make good relationship with you that builds that first step or point of contact, so you can always feel free and feel relaxed and not scared to contact and say like I need some help with this. So, they're not intimidating they are open and friendly but also professional and not afraid to say like what the truth is.

**{CUWA Teacher 3}**

What I found that my mentor teacher does really well was set objectives for the week for myself. So, it could be giving a compliment to every child on Wednesday. Little things like that you can build on like giving you a structure to go off and giving you feedback and making it actual relevant feedback like your timing is off, but really getting down to why is your timing off and what can we do to help you, or give you resources or things that you could implement to make your teaching better instead of just saying this needs to be worked on. **{CUWA Teacher 1}**

An implication from this study is that focussing on the key attributes of a mentor could significantly influence the emotional transition of an ECT and bolster their future career aspirations. Sharply honed mentor skills eased the transition from CUWA Intern to ECT, as two Beginning Teachers commented:

A bit worried more like I wasn't sure I could do this, but once you get over the first month yes it was... and I haven't really been mentored before and to

have someone tell you that you're going to make mistakes and it's ok, so you don't have to be perfect as I have that type of personality,...it's good to have that! **{Beginning Teacher 1}**

I think you also start to think about like where I'm going in my career. What's your future going to be like? I know for example in my learning area you have to specialise in a type of science if you want to get anywhere other than Year seven and eight you know. So, it's kind of what you're doing and so you start thinking a bit more about your future. **{Beginning Teacher 7}**

The value of introducing a parallel training program for both ECTs and mentors was suggested by Salazar, Lowenstein and Brill (2010) and Whitaker and Fiore (2013). The implementation of such a program would provide a two-fold benefit, namely, enhancing an ECT's teaching through constructive feedback; and engaging a mentor through the learning of current pedagogy. A further finding was that the mentoring of Beginning Teachers in regional areas was influenced by the broader experiences of their principal. The influence of the principal in the mentoring process can impact ECTs in both lifestyle and educational choices, as two principals suggested:

... we needed to talk about how you stock the fridge and get some easy cooked meals. **{Principal 6}**

We had a staff member have an accident [after driving on her own for 4 hours] on coming back from PD just recently; it's a real issue for regional schools. **{Principal 5}**

The complexity and handling of professional or personal issues experienced by an ECT may be alleviated by a mentor and/or school leader who possesses the requisite attributes.

#### **Principle 4: Understanding the importance of mentor feedback to ECTs.**

The two types of feedback mostly provided by mentors to interns and ECTs were highlighted. With regard to the former, the importance of the inclusion of targeted teaching strategies in a tailored mentoring program is found in two recent Grattan Institute Reports: *Targeted Teaching* by Goss, Hunter, Romanes and Parsonage (2015) and *Widening Gaps* by



Goss, Sonnemann, Chisholm and Nelson (2016). A mentor trained to collaboratively to work with an ECT in the implementation of targeted teaching strategies could instill confidence through offering, as composite points from the above two sources indicate,

1. Professional collegial support;
2. Exposure to relevant school policies and procedures;
3. Peer assistance with assessment tasks;
4. Relevant teacher registration requirements are met; and
5. Encouragement for ECTs settling into country areas and with their living conditions.

Figure 4.5 indicated that “Exchange of Teaching Ideas” with mentors during the internship (highly satisfied + satisfied categories), although very important (46.15%), appeared to have less of an impact on their mentees than did feedback on classroom management (69.23%) and the provision of emotional support (69.23%). This may be the result, in terms of perception anyway, of having had sufficient previous exposure to teaching ideas in a university course or professional practicum.

The significance of feedback via “Social Conversation” (70.27%) was judged to be as important for ECTs as the “Exchange of Teaching Ideas” (70.27%) (Table 4.15). Such a factor may be a key indicator in the development of the mentoring relationship. This understanding accords well with the findings of Leak (1986), who similarly found that social conversation was one of the most beneficial types of feedback. She stated with reference to her study on Beginning Teachers that, “Sixty-seven percent ranked Informal Conversation with the mentor as the function that they valued most highly” (p. 24). The benefit to mentoring of social or informal conversation observed from the present study is in assisting mentors and ECTs to build professional rapport. It must be cautioned, however, that as desirable as the building of strong mentee/mentor relationships are, the mentor must be careful to still maintain professional objectivity and integrity with their mentee. It is possible

to become too close and so create a counterproductive mentoring experience. Reading between the lines, it may be possible that this is occurring in the focus question interview (Appendix M & N) response from the following ECT,

My mentor is awesome and he took my class and he does things... here is my phone number, my email... that really helped me and like he is right into it, helps take the class and that's a lot of help. **{Beginning Teacher 16}**.

The degree to which ECTs found that a mentor benefited their teaching (Table 4.6) was lower (66.67%), than for CUWA responses (92.31%). It may be the case that the compulsory structure of the one-on-one mentoring program offered to CUWA Internship students indicates that the more structured mentoring program provided for these students resulted in an overall higher satisfaction rate for mentoring, compared to that of the Beginning Teachers.

Currently, there is no official mandatory training program for ECT mentors on how to provide feedback except for that being offered for school leaders through the Professional Supervision Unit for a school Head of Professional Practice (HOPP) coordinated by the CUWA([http://www.nd.edu.au/downloads/fremantle/colleges/education/pg\\_newsletter\\_iss2\\_oct09.pdf](http://www.nd.edu.au/downloads/fremantle/colleges/education/pg_newsletter_iss2_oct09.pdf)). This is despite the importance of providing focused feedback to ECTs having been advocated in the literature. Boogren (2015), for example, stated that “To help Beginning Teachers identify areas that need improvement (and therefore, engage in deliberate practice), a mentor can provide focused feedback – feedback that specifically refers to a teacher’s progress toward his or her growth goals” (p. 53). There may be the existence of a culture where the mentor feels that they need to act as a fount of all knowledge and wisdom, whereas in fact this is not the case and neither is it desirable. One person, albeit a more experienced one, telling another person what to do is not what mentoring is all about – as was affirmed in Chapter Two of this thesis. As Bickers (2016) points out, such focus on the importance of a single individual is not conducive to supporting the development of a sound system of education, “Australia needs to rethink its “lone teacher in front of a classroom” mentality if it

wants a more internationally competitive education system...”

<http://www.perthnow.com.au/news/western-australia/australia-needs-teaching-overhaul-to-change-world-ranking-experts/news-story/03cc6c110376a02499969c758472e879>.

Mentoring built on a mutually beneficial relationship is probably more sustainable than one built on only one way feedback. In this regard, the Department of Education, Victoria (2010) found that,

The reality in many schools today is that while assigned mentors may know more than new teachers about certain areas, such as school procedure or classroom management, the new teacher may sometimes know more than the mentor about new teaching strategies. If the school assumes the mentor always knows best, even about teaching strategies, innovative new teachers might quickly experience the mentor relationship as an oppressive one (p. 14).

A good starting point for training mentors in how to provide feedback to ECTs may be the AITSL web-site, which provides some online training and guidance for mentor teachers (<http://www.toolkit.aitsl.edu.au/category/coaching-mentoring>). It may also be worthwhile for the CEOWA exploring a partnership with the CUWA in which the Professional Supervision Unit could be utilized to the greater advantage of mentors. This general notion of establishing partnerships was presented by the Australian Federal Government’s Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group in their 2014 report *Action Now: Classroom Ready Teachers*, as being important for training mentors in the dispensing of feedback to ECTs,

The most effective professional experience is not only aligned and developed with course work but also supervised by effective teachers in collaboration with providers. International benchmarking of best practice has identified that staff leading and supervising professional experience in schools should be exemplary teachers who have undertaken focused training for their roles (p. 52).

The development of a targeted feedback training program for mentors is likely to improve the relationship between a mentor and an ECT. Several CUWA participants and ECTs observed that some mentors struggled initiating conversations around feedback, noting,

The mentoring had sort of dropped off I think at my school it's not the official school thing that they do! Um... the beginning of the year my Head of Year was my mentor but he didn't feel quite comfortable about that and he felt that in second term I should choose someone else. So, I chose someone else but it is kind of up to me to chase that up and find the time and I really haven't done that. **{Beginning Teacher 2}**

... we sit next to each other – my mentor sits next to me, but most of the time we're like ships apart we rarely see each other. When he's there, I say "what can I do here?" We have a chat, it's nothing formal. **{Beginning Teacher 3}**

Did not receive a lot [of mentoring]. **{CUWA Participant 4}**

Providing feedback in the area of teaching and learning is normally the main area of concern for a mentor, based on their professional knowledge and experience. The issue from a mentee perspective, however, seems to be that it is not the message communicated by the mentor that is important, rather, it is the manner in which the feedback is delivered that helps to cement any relationship. As one participant remarked, "A mentor needs to be willing to mentor" **{CUWA Participant 10}**.

### **Principle 5: Adopting a System-wide Mentoring Approach.**

A system-wide approach to mentoring would obviate the need for each school to design its own mentoring program. Mentoring principles do not differ significantly, they simply need to be adapted for context. A system-based approach would free up time in schools to concentrate on implementation rather than development of a program. The 163 CEOWA schools all devising their own mentoring principles and creating their own mentoring framework seems counterproductive to the mentoring enterprise. The introduction of a system-wide mentor training program could also better inform mentors about access to

system-based ECT initiatives and provide strategies for mentors similar to those discussed in the literature review, such as focused feedback and Learning Walks, that help ECTs to settle into the profession. A system-based approach could also ensure that standards and expectations are met and ad hoc ventures deterred. Insights from one ECT's experience based on focus group interview responses (Appendix N) of mentoring are illuminating in this regard,

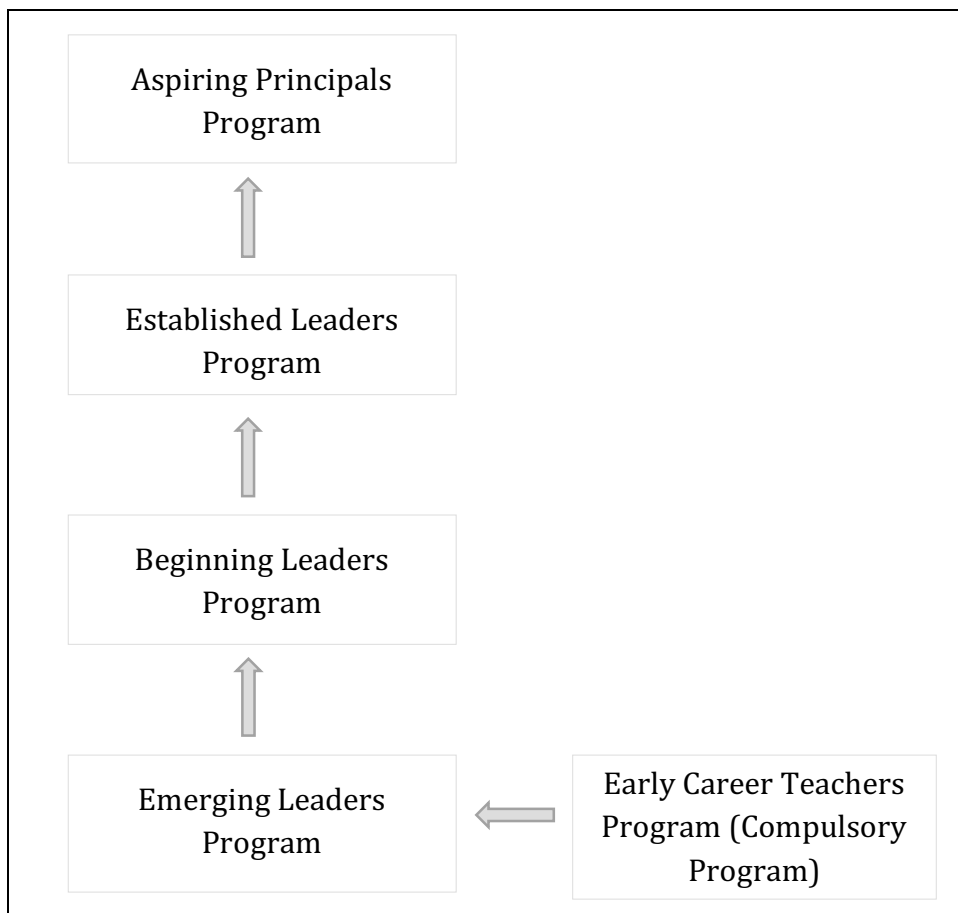
I think it's definitely like, if you are going to have a mentor program, that mentor needs to be trained in like what they need to look out for. My mentor is really great, he's been really helpful, he's been teaching for four years, so he's still in the same boat, he teaches the same way that I do... not everyone can be a mentor I don't think. You need to think about what they're experiencing rather than "look if you need anything come and see me, if not I don't want to hear about it. **{Beginning Teacher 3}**

There are many benefits of having system-wide mentoring guidelines, including,

- Inculcating the necessary ethos for teaching in Catholic schools;
- Producing commonality across the system which facilitates mobility;
- Creating and providing mentor-training programs;
- Catering for system-wide Religious Education Accreditation requirements;
- Supporting mandatory participation in a revised CEOWA ECT program;
- Tying mentoring to the APST, which might assist with permanency;
- Establishing a framework procedures for a school mentoring program;
- Resourcing school-based mentoring coordinators.

Apart from the above points, a system-wide mentoring training program also has implications for leadership training. The "Early Career Teacher Program", coordinated by the CEOWA, forms the introductory pathway for ECTs to enter the system Leadership Program as shown in Figure 5.1 (CEOWA, 2014). The Early Career Teacher Program was a compulsory program for ECTs conducted over their first two years of teaching. Schools received monetary support for releasing ECTs from school as part of their initial professional development. The recognition of the aspirations for leadership by ECTs (Table 4.9, question

theme 3) demonstrated the importance of the establishment of the CEOWA Early Career Teacher Program as the basis for its leadership programs in 2014. Regrettably, the CEOWA ceased the ECT program at the end of the 2016 school year, as it reviews the delivery of this and other leadership programs during 2017. On the basis of findings from the present research, the reinstatement of this or a similar program for ECTs would be highly beneficial.



*Figure 5.1.* ECTs CEOWA leadership program pathway.  
(Retrieved from CEOWA, 2014).

The inherent lack of a system-wide mentoring framework for Catholic Education in Western Australia creates a challenge for many principals and mentoring coordinators in schools. Understandably then, many school leaders do not possess the necessary training and understanding of the principles of mentoring, as reflected in principal comments,

Nice to have a Framework... would be a great guide to develop your school context. To have a framework would be a great guide for a start. **{Principal 3}**

Yes [regarding a framework], because ultimately these graduates with experience are going to move across the system and you'd like a level playing field and you would like to at least think they have received at least similar mentoring in their previous school to evaluate them. **{Principal 4}**

Systems component and then at the school do this in context. **{Principal 5}**

This school does have a specific policy pertaining to Beginning Teachers. Why reinvent the wheel? Let CEOWA create a generic style policy that all schools can adopt. **{Principal 13}**

I believe mentoring programs should be school driven. Each school has a unique context. However, I also believe that the system should acknowledge more, the importance of mentoring in our schools and the time and personnel required to do this well. **{Principal 14}**

The development of a system-wide mentoring framework for CEOWA schools might begin with the key components as suggested by Salazar, Lowenstein and Brill (2010) and Whitaker and Fiore (2013):

- The creation of the roles of system and school-based mentoring co-ordinators;
- The development of a mentor-training program; and
- The facilitation of new school-based mentoring models and programs for schools.

From here, a system-wide mentoring framework may move in the direction promulgated by many researchers over decades, including Knowles (1980), McNally and Oberski (2003), Corrigan and Loughran (2008), McNally and Blake (2008, 2012), Hudson (2010a), Jensen and Reichel (2011), and Bartlett-Bragg (2015). Distilling the composite insights of these researchers indicates that integration of the following fundamentals of mentoring would subsequently assist the implementation of a system-wide framework for mentoring,

- Structured mentor feedback;
- Self-directed and collaborative learning;
- The influence of a mentor's positive attributes; and
- The use of technology to assist the mentoring process.

It is encouraging that such fundamentals have been recognised by principals in the present study as being integral to establishing a mentoring program. Focus group interviews yielded the following observations,

... the Beginning Teacher and this teacher have discussed the particular aspect of teaching that will be focused upon. For example, this week, she was focusing on how effective the Beginning Teacher's questioning was in relation to extending the wait time between the question and the answer. **{Principal 13}**

We've got two new graduates and probably the same next year, I'm just lucky I've got some good leaders who are happy to be mentors to these people. **{Principal 6}**

Time, structured meetings, a mentor teacher. I believe there is a need to train mentor teachers on how to mentor. **{Principal 14}**

I believe that the best professional learning comes from working closely with excellent mentor teachers at school. These teachers should be trained in how best to work effectively with graduate teachers especially in terms of identifying areas that need improvement. This can be supplemented with some PD [Professional Development] from the system. **{Principal 13}**

... one of the other things with the mentoring it seems like the mentoring goes for a couple of years or goes for a year and then stops. The one thing sometimes that you wish that was there was the networking between the people getting mentored. So that over time they almost become in control of their own personal growth and professional growth and keep those lines of communication open. So, it's no longer people mentoring them they are then sharing those experiences amongst themselves. **{Principal 12}**

You do need to have mentors with high EQ. You must make time for the process to occur. This is a budgetary issue. If you know you want the mentor teacher or teacher leader to spend regular times with the Beginning Teachers, then do the math's and make generous allowances in your annual budget. **{Principal 13}**

It will be interesting to see now as my school has been fortunate enough to access those video regional conference facilities, so it will be interesting to see how that may be able to piggy back up on that PD using the technology. **{Principal 6}**

Nowadays, yes there is that tyranny of distance but that can be cut down in lots of ways like through email and through how we can communicate quickly though that and questions can be answered through say 50 people in a number of seconds. **{Principal 12}**



The instigation of a system-wide coordinator, working with a school mentor teacher and mentoring coordinator, could assist in the interpretation of the system-wide framework and the establishment of school-based mentoring programs, as two principals suggested in focus group interviews (Appendix J),

I believe that the best professional learning comes from working closely with excellent mentor teachers at school. These teachers should be trained in how best to work effectively with graduate teachers especially in terms of identifying areas that need improvement. This can be supplemented with some PD [Professional Development] from the system. **{Principal 1}**

I believe mentoring programs should be school driven. Each school has a unique context. However, I also believe that the system should acknowledge more the importance of mentoring in our schools and the time and personnel required to do this well. **{Principal 2}**

The training of mentors in how to use the APST to improve teaching, together with the use of an online emotional agility tools, such as a Myers-Briggs instrument (Lawrence, 2011), might further aid a mentoring co-ordinator and leaders in the selection of mentors. This might be undertaken by assisting with feedback training in areas such as individual goal-setting; group professional learning communities; and Instructional Learning Walks. Training in such skills could assist a school mentoring coordinator to nurture an ECT's emotional and cognitive resilience in a range of individual, group and school community settings. The benefit of utilizing a specialized emotional agility tool was described by David (2016) as being desirable,

The way we navigate our inner world - our everyday thoughts, emotions, experiences, and self-stories - is the most important determinant of our life success. It drives our actions, careers, relationships, happiness, health; everything (p. 2).

A model based on the discussion above is presented in Figure 5.2. It is envisaged that the model could be appealed to for creating the position of a system-based mentoring

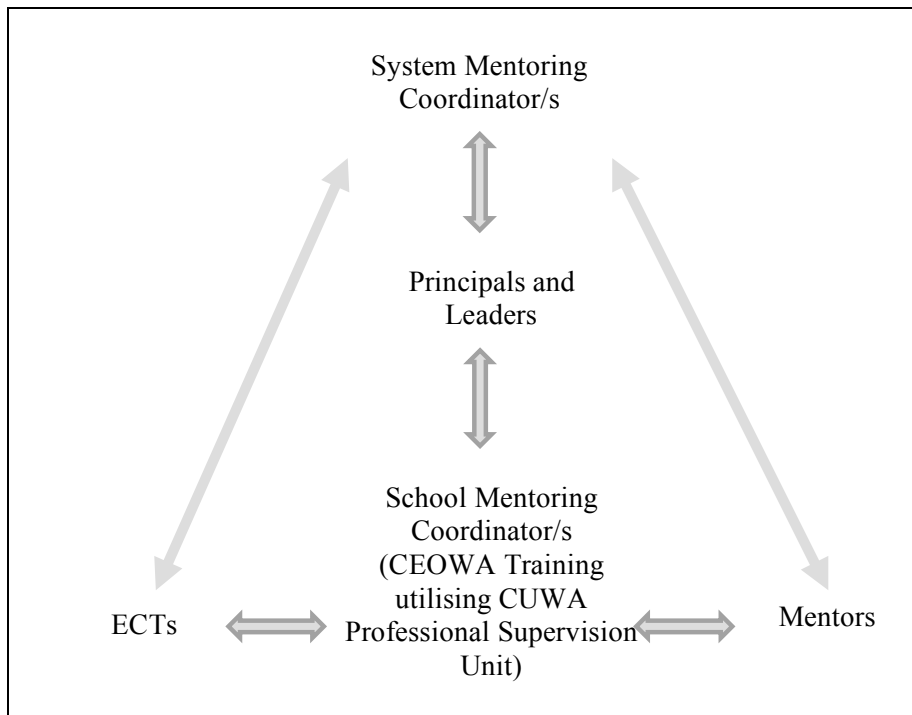


Figure 5.2. Structure for developing a system-based mentoring coordinator's role.

coordinator/s to support principals, other school leaders and school-based coordinators in the task of delivering an effective mentoring program.

### **Principle 6: Facilitating a School-based Mentoring Approach.**

The establishment of the role of school-based mentoring coordinator is important for a number of reasons in that it,

- Signals the importance of mentoring in the school;
- Creates a locally contextualised position;
- Gives gravitas to the incumbent holding the position;
- Establishes a person to whom mentors can turn for assistance/advice;
- Provides a contact point at the school for a system-based mentoring coordinator;
- Relieves the principal and other leaders of the immediate responsibility for the schools' mentoring program

The need for establishing such a position is supported by the following comments from focus group interviews (Appendix J),

It has to be school-based because of context within which they are working. Every school has their own context even though we are all in the same boat it has to be within context in which they are working. **{Principal 2}**

Additional to the work of this mentor teacher, we use another key teacher. She has one day out of her own class every Thursday and she goes into each of our Beginning Teachers' classrooms. She co-teaches with them. Generally, the Beginning Teacher & this teacher have discussed the particular aspect of teaching that will be focused upon. **{Principal 13}**

I just went and asked after the second Beginning Teacher's meeting and asked for a mentor. I'm pretty sure I was the only one out of 20 of us who hasn't got one. They were trying to get it up and going, but because there were so many new staff it was difficult to have a leadership member in charge of all of them. So, I just went and asked the lady "do you want to be my mentor?" **{Beginning Teacher 1}**

We have just had a new staff member start, so IT [Information Technology] is a big thing if you don't get that sorted straight away, like for accessing absentees... simple things. You need procedures in place so you can set these things up so they can access email, you can get onto the internet and access the principal blog... they are simple things but it should be just a process where you can just do it and tick it off. **{Principal 2}**

Similar sentiments are also found in the literature. As far back as 1975 Stenhouse (in Swann, 2009) later observed of his earlier work, "Stenhouse (1975), for example, in a discussion of the role of the teacher ... goes on to add as 'highly desirable' the 'readiness to allow other teachers to observe one's work ... and to discuss it with them on an open and honest basis'" (p. 99). Moyle (2015) wrote, "When coaching and mentoring approaches to school improvement are valued they are embedded into performance and school development policies. This means that performance development plans are explicitly linked to coaching and mentoring and school improvement" (p. 2). Moyle's words find support in those of Aspland (2016), who stated,

Research shows that graduates feel ready and prepared to teach but, when they enter the classrooms, they encounter loneliness and isolation; a lack of emotional, expert support and resources; and disillusioning school cultures (Retrieved from the ABC website <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2016-02-04/aspland-we-cant-afford-to-ignore-the-teacher-exodus/7139130>)

Finally, Swann (2009) also commented from her own study's findings that a sense of security, in part, "...came from the school-wide mentoring system which ensured that every member of staff, including administrators, cleaning and kitchen staff, teaching assistants and the head-teacher herself had someone to turn to, in complete confidence, to talk to about any issue arising in their work" (p. 84).

A significant observation from the study is that the principal and deputies are important in the mentoring process, although not necessarily in the role of ECT mentor. Principals and deputies may be perceived as being either too distant from the actual classroom situation or, by their position in the school, be perceived as being intimidating. The desirability of the physical proximity of the ECT to a mentor other than a key leader is articulated in the following comments from primary teacher focus group interviews (Appendix M & N),

So being able to go to her [A Senior Teacher] as our mentor, rather than the principal, has been really good because she knows a little more about those kids and what it's like to be in the room with those kids.

**{Beginning Teacher 4}**

With me my mentor is my head of year as well and I've actually found it a bit difficult because there is some kind of politics that goes on in our particular office and so he's kind of had to put out fires as well as being my mentor ... I kind of think it's better to have a peer or just a teacher not principal or a head of year. **{Beginning Teacher 1}**

Mine is also a deputy principal hence I've had 2 sessions over a year and it doesn't work. **{Beginning Teacher 2}**

Secondary teachers expressed a similar sentiment. In three out of the four focus group interviews and in the March open-ended survey questions (Appendices K, M & N), several secondary Beginning Teachers experienced tension with certain mentors who held positions of leadership. Such tension between some ECTs and their mentors became evident as some ECTs commented:

Could definitely be improved! They need to choose mentors who are not in positions of leadership and who have time to help us and give us practical advice. {Participant 1}

Yes, because the majority of the mentors are heads of learning or deputies and have no time for us. {Participant 2}

By having mentors who volunteer to do the role, rather than just delegating senior staff as mentors, as they do not have enough time to follow up on it. {Participant 3}.

In cases such as these, where leaders were also mentors, the benefits of mentoring may be negated. This was also the finding of Johnson, Down, Le Cornu, Peters, Sullivan, Pearce and Hunter (2010) who indicated, by way of example, “In one notable case all three teachers were new to the school, two were new graduates and the principal was newly appointed in the role and unable to be a satisfactory mentor to the new teachers” (p. 35). The role of leaders as mentors might be best suited to undertaking tasks such as the co-ordination, training and selection of mentors, as advocated by Boogren (2015),

When supporting Beginning Teachers, school leaders must provide more than a back-to-basic school orientation or a randomly selected partnership with an experienced teacher. In light of the complexities of the mentoring role, school leaders must carefully select mentors, support them as they develop relationships with mentees, and give them concrete guidance about the type of support they are expected to offer new teachers (p. 13).

A nexus can be noted with regard to school-based mentoring and future leadership aspirations. Currently, the responsibility for selection of ECTs to apply for a leadership program after their first two years of teaching rests with the principal. Procedures associated with this task are time-consuming for both the principal and their leadership team. As such, it has been suggested that the default position could manifest as a simple and unsatisfactory tick-the-box exercise (Yukovic, 2015). One suggestion to assist with the identification of an ECT’s leadership potential might be the establishment of a system-trained but school-based mentoring coordinator. Such an approach might ensure uniformity of standards across the

system, which are seen as desirable given that teachers move from school-to-school within the system. Part of the coordinator's role might be to identify and mentor future leader aspirants and make recommendations to the leadership team. It has also been suggested that the creation of a school-based mentoring coordinator position might improve the liaison and relationship between mentors, university supervisors and principals (Gudwin & Wallace, 2010; Lieberman, Hansen & Gless, 2012).

The importance of resourcing the role of the mentoring coordinator cannot be underestimated, nor can the importance of the training or the leadership responsibility that encapsulates this role, as was recognized by MacCallum, Beltman, Coffey, Cooper and Jarvis (2014), who wrote, "When establishing mentoring programs agencies and organisations need to ensure that there is sufficient ongoing funding for continuity of the coordinator role" (p. 32). Their observations find support in the work of Sunde and Ulrik (2014) who contented that, "school leaders choose practical solutions when selecting mentors, but their choices could also implicitly reveal what they think of mentoring. School leaders are central when it comes to securing quality mentoring and close teamwork in a school" (pp. 296-7).

The introduction of the role of a mentoring coordinator who would assist a principal assigning a mentor to a mentee in a school and overseeing the transition of an ECT as part of a school-based mentoring program, might also prevent mentoring relationships from disappearing or deteriorating. A mentoring relationship may disappear when a mentor leaves the school. Unless there is a procedure in place for sourcing a replacement mentor, the ECT may be left without any experienced peer support. Also, when a relationship between mentor and mentee is fracturing, a school-based mentoring coordinator may be able to assist in mediating between both parties. In a study of youth mentoring in Western Australia, MacCallum, Beltman, Coffey and Cooper (2014) found the role of a coordinator, together

with the careful screening for the matching of a mentor with a mentee, as a significant factor in relationship durability,

In all programs mentors went through a comprehensive screening process to check their suitability for the program, and also for program staff to get to know them better...Mentors and mentees were purposively matched using available information on interests, experience, cultural connections, approach and availability (pp. 22-3).

The insights of MacCallum, Beltman, Coffey and Cooper (2014), in discussing the successful creation of a mentoring coordinator of youth programs, support the idea of creating such a role in a school environment.

An example of a successful school-based mentoring program, in-situ at the researcher's own school, involves clear articulation of the roles identified in the mentoring process, namely those of principal, mentor, mentee and mentoring co-ordinator (Figure 5.3).

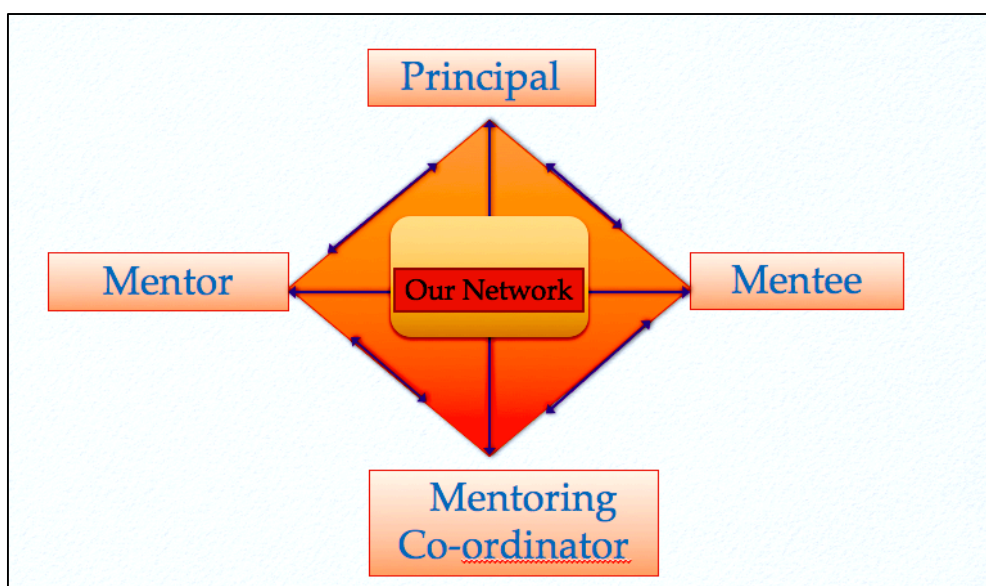


Figure 5.3. Positioning of the school mentoring coordinator at the researcher's school.

At the researcher's present school, the role of mentoring coordinator was created to enable liaison with both mentor and an ECT in the planning of relevant professional development outcomes that assist the on-going process of teacher registration and permanency. Such a

strategy finds support in the work of the Department of Education, Victoria (2014) which reported that,

One of the mentor's roles is to guide and support the Beginning Teacher through the registration process, rather than evaluate, judge or assess their performance against the standards. Mentors may however, help the Beginning Teacher to recognise how they're progressing in relation to the standards and help them to know when they're ready to submit their application for registration as a Proficient Teacher (p. 2).

Envisaging the mentoring coordinator working with leaders, ECTs and mentors as the catalyst in attending to the teacher registration process may assist any queries a mentee or mentor may have during the transition from graduate to proficient teacher. The question of permanency raised by some ECTs related to being employed on temporary contracts.

Mentoring at the school level may also have a role in helping ECTs with career prospects. The uncertainty for Beginning Teachers employed on a temporary rather than a permanent contract was a potential source of tension between ECTs and principals as responses to focus group interviews indicated (Appendix M). Presently, a principal chooses to employ an ECT on a temporary contract, normally for one to two reasons: A legal obligation to protect the position of teachers on maternity/paternity leave for often up to five years; and a short-term general leave provision such as long-service and extended sick leave, which is at the discretion of the current employer (CEOWA, 2015).

Many ECTs who accept positions in schools would be employed on a temporary contract due to the above-mentioned reasons, unless they accepted a permanent teaching position, in which case they would still be subject to a one-year probationary period (CECWA, 2015). Potentially, the lack of permanency that results from a temporary contract can affect ECTs outside of school, such as when applying for a bank home loan. At the school level, the lack of permanency can alter an ECTs future career aspirations. This notion was elaborated further by Ewing in Yukovic (2015) who stated, "Often, they start off in



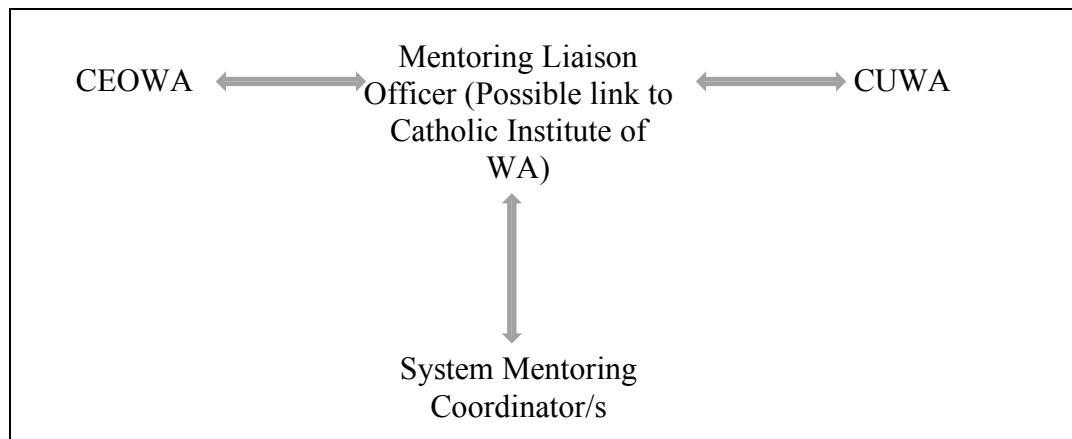
casual, temporary or short-term contracts and sometimes they're OK to do that for a while, but if it's long term, they can get quite disillusioned" (pp. 29-30)

Perhaps, the creation in Catholic schools of the role of a trained system mentoring coordinator as an advocate, à la Figure 5.4, would foster the important discussion about permanency between the school-based mentoring coordinator; a mentor; ECT; principal and CEOWA. The lack of feedback provided to some ECTs in this area was described in a discouraged tone by one ECT after six months of teaching in a country school, "Yep we have to apply for our jobs again" {Participant 3}. It must be acknowledged that not all ECTs may see a temporary position as disadvantageous. Some may view it as a wonderful opportunity to gain a permanent position through exhibiting their competency. Further investigation, is warranted to explore the impact of permanent and temporary positions on the psyche of ECTs and whether this arrangement affects them remaining in or leaving the teaching profession.

In summary, a well planned school-based mentoring program greatly assists the transition for a Post-Internship (Pre-Service) teachers in becoming a Beginning Teacher, in the building of staff relationships, and having easy access to resources and policies. Ideally, the whole workplace transition might be further enhanced through the creation of a mentoring liaison officer (Figure 5.4) independently employed by the Catholic Archbishop of Perth, through an educational agency such as the Catholic Institute of Western Australia. Such a person could work collaboratively to co-ordinate mentor training programs between the CUWA, CEOWA, system mentoring coordinator and the individual school-based mentoring coordinator (Figure 5.4). The importance of a mentoring training was described by Salazar, Lowenstein and Brill (2010) in the following way,

Mentor development is also an opportunity for continued alignment of program goals. As we make adjustments for the curriculum for our teacher candidates, we need to provide mentor teachers with a parallel curriculum (pp. 47-50).

Collaboration could occur in the sharing of human, curricula and financial resources with regard to the training of mentors.



*Figure 5.4.* Role of a system-wide mentoring liaison officer.

#### **Principle 7: Interfacing with Teacher Education Institutions.**

Numerous models already exist endorsing the benefits of establishing a collaborative university/school-based approach to developing a mentoring program. Among the more popular are, first, the Queensland Education Department, which utilizes a mentoring training program, offered through the Queensland University of Technology. The program provides course credit for the teachers training as mentors (DET QLD, 2017). Second, the Alliance for Catholic Education (ACE) mentoring program for Catholic schools in America is coordinated by the University of Notre Dame (USA) and educates pre-service teachers to staff Catholic schools. Thirdly, the New Teacher Centre (USA) co-ordinates mentoring programs and prepares leaders in coordinating mentoring for Beginning Teachers. Bartlett-Bragg (2015) described how she believed that a hybrid model was essential for conceptualizing and implementing the principles of mentoring, declaring, “Many organisations are tackling the continuous knowledge acquisition and changing environment with a mix of strategies that are seeing performance management and professional development blending into a form of

mentoring (yet to be officially labelled) that merges all the approaches above into an ecosystem of engagement and shared knowledge” (p. 3).

Scope exists for greater liaison between teacher education providers and schools. One peak body identified as the Deans for Impact, consisting of Deans of Eighteen Colleges of Education across the USA, contends that, “If we could really take control of the profession and increase the rigour such that teachers are effective from Day 1, I think that will prove to the public at large that this is an investment worth making and one worth increasing” (Westervelt, 2015). The present research has shown that the position advocated by Deans for Impact in the USA may be applicable to CEOWA Post-Internship (Pre-Service) teachers and educational institutions working together. Such a move may be beneficial for several reasons. First, is the assistance provided to some Beginning Teachers with a competent mentor, which leads to the ECT developing into a professional willing to stay in the profession. Training such mentors could be facilitated through the universities. Second, is the role-modelling of best teacher practice by the mentor, through meeting regularly and sharing ideas that assist the development of their student. A mentoring-the-mentor model could be developed by universities. Finally, a school mentoring program may assist the achievement of school improvement goals, support for which can be found in the broader mentoring literature (Alliance for Excellent Education (AEE), 2004; Boreen et al., 2009; Butler, Dickinson & Pittard, 2003; Dobbins, Mitchell & Murray, 1998; Freeman-Loftis, 2011; & Nakamura et al., 2009). Support of each other - school and university and vice versa – is in many ways the *raison d'être* of Catholic education and ought to be given serious consideration.

As argued by Westervelt (2015), the position taken by Deans for Impact (USA) highlighted the essential communication required between those responsible for teacher

training (CUWA, in the present research) and the students' future employer (CEOWA, in the present research). One principal in the focus group expressed the following opinion,

There should be a link between say CEO[WA], universities and schools so you've got the best possible chance of getting the best people to want to apply... If you have that coordinator so you start early at university, CEO[WA] supports it in whichever way it can. {Principal 7}

A CEOWA mentoring coordinator developing liaisons between schools and university teacher education institutions might prove advantageous for both organisations. For schools because they can secure expert advice regarding the development of a mentoring program; and for universities who can be certain that they will be sending their new graduates to mentor-resourced schools.

### **Principle 8: Mentoring and Religious Education.**

The Vatican document, *Lay Catholics in Schools: Witnesses to Faith*, clearly establishes the role and place of Religious Education and in the vocation to teach in a Catholic School:

(24.) ...The Lay Catholic educator is a person who exercises a specific mission within the Church by living, in faith, a secular vocation in the communitarian structure of the school... To this lay person, as a member of this community, the family and the Church entrust the school's educational endeavor...

(37.) The work of a lay educator has an undeniably professional aspect; but it cannot be reduced to professionalism alone. Professionalism is marked by, and raised to, a super-natural Christian vocation. The life of the Catholic teacher must be marked by the exercise of a personal vocation in the Church, and not simply by the exercise of a profession... (Sacred Congregation, 1982).

All teachers in Catholic primary schools (where there are no specialist Religious Education specialists) are expected to teach in the area of Religious Education. Accordingly, all primary ECTs from their first day of teaching are expected to teach confidently in all learning areas, including in the mandated Religious Education learning area. It was identified from the study, however, that most primary ECTs received minimal feedback in the area of

Religious Education (Table 4.15). Perhaps, the reason why some mentors were unwilling to provide feedback to ECTs in Religious Education, might be explained by the findings of a report that 81% of all Catholic teachers are not practicing Catholics (Curry, 2016). Such a lack of knowledge about Religious Education and understanding of Catholic Church teaching was also noted in a Pastoral Letter prepared by the Bishops of NSW and ACT, called *Catholic Schools at a Crossroads* (2007). Their finding indicated that further investigation was specifically required to assist the vocation of ECTs.

Some areas identified in the literature (Alliance for Excellent Education (AEE), 2004; Boreen et al., 2009; Freeman-Loftis, 2011; Hudson, 2010a; Jensen, Hunter, Sonnemann & Burns, 2012; & Nakamura et al., 2009) that might assist mentors in improving feedback to ECTs, are also applicable in the area of Religious Education,

- Peer observation and collaboration
- Direct observation of classroom teaching and learning
- Student surveys and feedback
- Self-assessment
- Parent surveys and feedback
- External observation
- Familiarity with content knowledge
- Possibly the most important of all – mentor enthusiasm in the area of Religious Education

The importance of mentoring ECTs in Religious Education and Faith Issues more generally was highlighted by principals' comments extracted via focus group interview questions (Appendix J):

I believe that we must take real care of our Beginning Teachers. It is absolutely essential that we carefully monitor their development as a teacher in their first three years. If they are working in a Catholic school, they need to be encouraged to understand the importance of being a part of a Catholic parish. Development of their people skills... particularly how to speak positively and with confidence to parents and home/life balance. We want these teachers to be well rounded people with interests away from school.  
**{Principal 12}**

I had three promotional positions last year, a Head of Staff, a Deputy Principal- I got two people, but for our Religious Education coordinator we get none, none! **{Secondary Principal 1}**

Although CUWA students who are desirous of teaching in a Catholic school do complete academic units in the area of Religious Education, there appears to be some confusion regarding the school expectations vis-à-vis parish life,

I understand better how a Catholic school is operated to develop new and effective teaching strategies by developing relationships with my mentor, students, parents and staff. Learning from each experience through valuable feedback...I also went to my first Mass ever where it was run by two of the older parishioners of the parish so it was already consecrated bread, it was very interesting like where's the priest and it was my first Sunday in the country and it was like where was the priest and its like he doesn't turn up today, he was elsewhere **{CUWA, Participant 1}**.

Utilizing an online forum for a discussion of teaching Religious Education might also be beneficial for the sharing of teaching ideas in Religious Education with ECTs. Sharing of programing ideas, resources, assessment and reporting strategies and faith matters, may be topics of common concern.

### **Principle 9: Mentoring in the City vis-à-vis the Country.**

Study results clearly corroborated the literature that mentoring ECTs in country areas is more challenging than in the city (Johnson, Down, Le Cornu, Peters, Sullivan, Pearce and Hunter, 2010; Trinidad, Broadley, Terry, Boyd, Lock, Byrne, Sharplin & Ledger, 2012). The significance of location on an ECTs general development has been raised by McNally et al. (2004), who stated that, "Differences in teaching context extend to different towns and schools as well. New teachers themselves are aware of this and of how it could affect their acceptance..." (p. 8). Clune (2013) also alluded to the effect of location from his former role as retired Western Australian Catholic principal. He specifically remarked on the notable

difference experienced by ECTs embarking on a career in a country Catholic School in Western Australia, stating,

Teachers in rural schools are often in transit – Early Career Teachers who could not gain an offer of employment in urban schools but who will transfer to metropolitan schools as soon as possible... Whilst these are people of dedication and expertise who strive on behalf of their pupils they are, largely, temporarily committed since the staff of the rural school is transient (p. 3).

The 2016 Gratten Institute study (Goss, Sonnemann, Chisholm & Nelson) reported that country students undertaking NAPLAN testing were two years behind city students, stating, “Policymakers wanting to support educationally disadvantaged students can target them geographically, with regional and rural areas most in need” (p. 37).

The previously mooted adaption of a system-wide mentor-training program and mentoring coordinator position for each Catholic School, might help alleviate some of the concerns raised by the Gratten findings. It has been shown that specialised coaching for all ECTs in the implementation of teaching strategies, is known to greatly improve student learning (Goss, Hunter, Romanes & Parsonage, 2015). The identification and honing of such strategies with ECTs would normally be the responsibility of a mentor, however, where no mentor is available, an ECTs’ teaching is likely to suffer. In this regard, Dunne and Villani (2007) proffered,

When teachers know what they are teaching, why they are teaching it in particular ways for particular groups of students, what they would do differently (or keep) the next time and why, these teachers are intentional (deliberate) about their practice. Effective mentors are deliberate in their use of various coaching approaches to enhance new teachers’ intentionality and help them move toward becoming excellent teachers (pp. 56-7).

Unfortunately, there seems to be a paucity of mentors in country regions.

Consequently, sound theoretically-based mentoring initiatives are difficult to implement.

Principals have utilized various strategies in an attempt to boost the number of teachers and

hence mentors to country areas. One principal, frustrated with attrition problems encountered in her regional school commented in the focus group interview (Appendix J) “I keep running out of mentors because they leave – especially in the country.” (Principal 1).

Technology might also be harnessed in the service of providing more accessible mentoring opportunities. Technology initiatives might enable ECTs, especially in the country, to access the services of a trained mentor (Trinidad & Broadly, 2010). Strategies may resemble what the Western Australian Department of Education employs to reach children in isolated areas, namely, the program offered by the School of Isolated and Distance Education (<http://www.side.wa.edu.au/index.php>). A similar initiative for the training of mentors might be envisaged, whereby in the absence of an in-situ mentor, trained mentors elsewhere are available to an ECT via web-based video-linking.

#### **Principle 10: Generating Employment Security.**

Clearly, there is no direct correlation between being the recipient of a mentoring program and achieving greater employment security. Neither is that the intention of a mentoring program. Nevertheless, the skills that are acquired by participation in a mentoring program may hold ECTs in good stead for when they do apply for teaching positions. The finding that nearly half of the ECTs received minimal feedback from mentors and/or principals regarding the APST and negotiating permanency (Survey, Q17, Appendix L) was significant, as this may have impacted the relationship that some ECTs had with their mentor and/or principal.

Although some ECTs received feedback in regard to the Proficient Stage of the APST as a Key Performance Indicator for their ongoing employment, 54% of ECTs reported no such feedback (Survey, Q17, Appendix L). Several comments from ECTs in the city August focus group interviews (Appendix N) revealed some confusion in their understanding of



permanency and a possible lack of clarity in how leaders use the APST to provide feedback on permanency as was indicated by the following participant comments,

With the whole transition process, like being registered and stuff – I've been to a PD [Professional Development] about the mentor transition process and when you officially start that process and what you need to collect, but do you know officially when we have to have that done by?  
**{Beginning Teacher 8}**

What is that? Is permanency ongoing? Yes? **{Beginning Teacher 1}**

My principal called four all of us in and said we have two permanent positions going and I have to tell you that because I have to advertise it. I don't want you to get a fright when you see your position being advertised. So, we have to reapply, there's a temporary and there's two permanent positions, so just depends who gets it. **{Beginning Teacher 1}**

Mine is temporary, but I have to go for another interview as well. That's weird! **{Beginning Teacher 9}**

One possible solution to alleviate the confusion caused by insufficient leader/mentor information to ECTs regarding the APST and permanency conditions was suggested in the focus group interview by a principal (Appendix J): “I believe that an APST-type program needs to be adopted by ALL schools. In fact, AITSL should direct all appraisal programs” (Principal 13). AITSL Beginning Teacher online workshops and online feedback exemplar tools for leaders and teachers are currently in the process of being designed, with some having already been released, such as *The My Induction Application* (AITSL, 2017). In the future, AITSL provision of resources such as this one may lead to those involved in mentoring having a clearer understanding of the APST requirements for Beginning Teachers. There is an obvious need to clarify the continuing employment situation for ECTs. Ongoing concerns and apprehensions about future employment create the sort of uncertainty that may lead to despondency and ultimately result in the ECT leaving the profession.

## Summary of Major Conclusions

Throughout this chapter, the perceptions of CUWA, ECTs and principals examined the transition from Post-Internship (Pre-Service) teacher, to ECT, to proficient teacher. An interpretation of data motivated by Table 5.1 enables conclusions to be drawn. These are now presented in summary form:

- Conclusion 1.* Mentors eased the transition from Internship to Early Career Teacher.
- Conclusion 2.* The guarantee of a mentor may not alleviate every problem faced by an ECT, but their input is invaluable.
- Conclusion 3.* The key characteristics of a mentor, namely, empathy and teaching knowledge, were attributes that could significantly assist the future aspirations of an ECT.
- Conclusion 4.* As an ECT's career progressed from novice to proficient teacher, the feedback provided to them became less significant.
- Conclusion 5.* The importance of feedback to the vocation of both post-internship teachers and ECTs, indicated further investigation was specifically required in the Religious Education learning area.
- Conclusion 6.* Nearly half of ECTs received no feedback from mentors and or/principals regarding the prospect of ongoing permanency.
- Conclusion 7.* There is a strong urgency to develop a system-based training program for both ECTs and mentors.
- Conclusion 8.* The majority of principals recognised the importance of mentoring through the recommendation of a system-wide framework.
- Conclusion 9.* Leaders are important in the mentoring process, however, not necessarily in the role of an ECT's mentor.
- Conclusion 10.* The mentoring of Beginning Teachers in regional areas is Influenced, among other things, by the experiences of the principal. Their influence in the mentoring process can impact ECTs in both lifestyle and educational choices.

## **A Proposed Mentoring Framework**

The importance of mentoring ECTs as identified in the literature, together with the findings of the present study relating to the subsidiary questions (as discussed in the previous chapter), segues well to recommending the development of a system-wide mentoring framework to be used by all Catholic schools. Buchanan, Raffaele, Glozier and Kanagaratnam (2016) suggested that the benefits of a formal mentoring framework are, "... making sure that both parties have a shared agreement about their roles in the relationship and identifying potential goals and challenges" (p. 26). The provision of such a framework would ensure that: school leadership has the necessary system-based support to implement local school-based mentoring programs; the use of terminology and understanding of roles is common; ECTs are provided with the necessary emotional support and formal feedback to progress with their achievement of the APST; and system-wide training is provided for mentors.

Numerous models of mentoring have been advocated, with some of the most popular ones having been introduced in Chapter Two. On the basis of the mixed method research that has been conducted, and utilizing a grounded theory approach, a framework can now be proposed which is being named in this thesis the Borromeo Mentoring Framework (BMF). The BMF is so named to acknowledge the life of Catholic Saint, scholar and mentor, Charles Borromeo (1538-1584), who demonstrated the values of knowledge, humility, eagerness, teaching and prayer (Atwood, 2012; Guissano, 2015). These values assisted the Church in reforms that involved the mentoring of catechists, teachers and priests, in a period of great change in the church, the Catholic Reformation of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. During this time of great renewal, St Charles Borromeo pondered:

If teaching and preaching is your job, then study diligently and apply yourself to whatever is necessary for doing the job well. Be sure that you first preach by the way you live. If you do not, people will notice that you say one thing, but live otherwise, and your words will bring only cynical laughter and a derisive shake of the head (Atwood, 2012, p. 215).

His writings on Catholic education are still relevant for ECTs and Catholic teachers today. As such, as the implementation of BMF is designed to equip mentors and mentees with the skills required to enhance the education of children in Catholic schools.

The BMF is considered to be appropriate for furthering dialogue about mentoring in Catholic schools as it remains cognizant of the faith imperative that underpins the Catholic education system. It is also a comprehensive framework in that it is an evidence-based framework having been created on the basis of the findings from the present research. The BMF is pertinent to the present study as it has the potential to assist mentors to provide effective feedback to ECTs in many areas, including: individual teacher self-reflection; collaborative partner teaching and observation; Religious Education teaching; and participating in whole staff learning opportunities. The BMF preempts the role of a system-wide coordinator/s responsible for framework oversight and liaison with CEOWA, CUWA staff, principals, ECTs and mentors. The BMF is now described in detail.

### **The Borromeo Mentoring Framework**

Based on the current research, a new system-wide framework is now proposed to assist with transition of ECTs in Catholic Schools in Western Australia. This Framework is termed the Borromeo Mentoring Framework (BMF) and is created on six inter-related and dynamic foundations:

1. Personal Formation and The Vocation to Teach in a Catholic School.
2. Catholic Church Influences on current Mentoring Teachers.
3. Current Influences affecting the Mentoring of Beginning Teachers in Catholic Education.
4. Implementing a System-based Approach to Mentoring.
5. Influences on Mentoring Beginning Teachers from a Catholic Education Context.
6. Implementing a School-based approach to a Beginning Teacher Mentoring Program.

Each of these foundations is now considered separately, after which a model is presented to show how integration of all six conceived.

### **1. Personal Formation and The Vocation to Teach in a Catholic School.**

The aim of developing the vocation of all teachers has been expounded by both Eisner (1983) and Palmer (2007). Eisner (1983), described in relation to teaching experiences that, “... when one receives from students the kind of glow that says you have touched my life, satisfactions flow that exceed whatever it is that sabbaticals and vacations can provide” (p. 12). His further comment interfaces well with the whole thrust of mentoring as developed in this thesis,

It is well past the time that schools create the organisational structure in which teachers and administrators can reflect on their activities as a regular part of their jobs, not simply within the scope of an in-service education program. Staff development needs to be a continuing part of what it means to be a teacher... (p. 12).

Parker (2007) reflected on how effective teaching was influenced by the individual identity and integrity of the teacher. He raised an important connection between mentoring and the development of a personal vocation in stating, “... the mainstay of my vocation, to trust the calling of my vocation, to trust the calling of my soul, a trust that deepened when I was able to decode this early experience of being mentored” (p. 23). In the work of both Eisner and Palmer are found the principles that ought to underlie the teaching profession, namely, satisfaction, organisational support, a calling to care, effective mentoring. Such attributes augur well with the Catholic education ethos which sees all of these as being crucial but adds the caveat that they need to be empowered by God (The Sacred Congregation, 1997, *The Catholic School*). The development of a mentoring relationship underpins the central premise that an individual’s vocation and expectations to teach in a Catholic school are facilitated by a mentoring role-model. Such a mentor provides

opportunities that support an ECTs vocation by establishing a relationship based on openness; questioning; inventiveness; persistence; emotional stability; generosity and empathy (Swann, Peacock, Hart & Drummond, 2010). The mentor of ECTs, in a Catholic School, is a mentor in both education and faith development.

## **2. Catholic Church Influences on current Mentoring Teachers.**

The Catholic Education System in Western Australia, through its two arms the CEOWA and CUWA, plays a major role in training pre-service and ECTs in the ethic that underpins Catholic education. The recognition and importance of this ethic in the teaching vocation has been proclaimed since Vatican II in 1962, in numerous Church and Papal documents, such as Canon Law, Pastoral Letters and Papal Encyclicals. Some of the relevant documents state,

The content of Religious Education: must be linked with the real-life experiences of the generation to which it is addressed, showing close acquaintance with its anxieties and questionings, struggles and hopes. (John Paul II, 1979, *Catechesi Tradendae*, 49).

This way [the way traced out by Christ himself] cannot, then, be foreign to those who evangelise. Travelling along it, they will experience the challenge of education in all its urgency. (The Sacred Congregation, 1997, *The Catholic School*, 21).

The person is the starting point, always coming back to the relationships of people among themselves and with God. (Paul VI, 1975, *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 20).

Education in environmental responsibility can encourage ways of acting which directly and significantly affect the world around us, such as avoiding the use of plastic and paper, reducing water consumption, separating refuse, cooking only what can reasonably be consumed, showing care for other living beings, using public transport or car-pooling, planting trees, turning off unnecessary lights, or any number of other practices. (Francis 1, 2015, *Laudato Si*; 211).

The contribution of the role of the Church through documents such as those mentioned above, may enable the system and school-based mentoring coordinators to plan, together with principals, professional development opportunities to grow a culture of learning within the ethical framework of Catholic education. Sergiovanni (1984) defined school culture as, "...the collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one school from another... School culture includes values, symbols, beliefs, and shared meanings of parents, students, teachers, and others conceived as a group or community." (p. 11). He further added that a school culture, "provides a source of meaning and significance for teachers, students, administrators, and others as they work" (p. 12). Sedgwick (2008) agrees, stating in relation to school-based mentoring that,

... there was strong support for basing classroom practice on what research tells us works. The challenge is to create a school based culture which not only sets high expectations for its students but accepts that students and teachers need both, in their own ways, to be learners ([https://insights.unimelb.edu.au/vol3/5\\_Sedgwick.html](https://insights.unimelb.edu.au/vol3/5_Sedgwick.html)).

A robust system of mentoring within a given school can help to foster a sense of "meaning and significance" by reinforcing to ECTs that they are important and that those around them care about their future.

### **3. Current Influences affecting the Mentoring of Beginning Teachers in Catholic Education.**

This study has identified numerous influences that affect how smoothly an ECT transitions into a Catholic school. The major factors discussed included city/country differences; lack of clarity of and familiarity with required documentation; the availability and competency of mentors; the support received from the school and the system; the "readiness" of graduates in terms of training received; the commitment of principles and other school leaders to the enterprise of mentoring; and the budgets available to support

training of mentors. It is only when such factors are seriously considered and catered for that a program supporting ECTs has any chance of securing maximal effect.

The current ECT program, until its cessation at the end of 2016, was coordinated by the CEOWA leadership team as part of the introduction for the system-wide leadership pathway. A recommendation is to have any future ECT and Mentor training programs under the umbrella of the BMF and coordinated by the system-wide mentoring coordinator/s and mentoring liaison officer (Figure 5.4). This may see some existing program areas currently operated separately by the CEOWA such as the System-wide Orientation Program to Teach in a Catholic school, and the CUWA Professional Supervision Unit (or similar) program under the BMF umbrella.

#### **4. Implementing a System-based Approach to Mentoring.**

The study has shown that participants from all three cohorts have indicated a desire for coordinated system-based input. Such input, has the advantage of creating a broadly-based mentoring framework that then does not need to be created by each school individually. This would save leaders a great deal of time and effort, as well as ensure that attention is given to key aspects in devising a school-based mentoring program. System-based mentoring coordinators would then be in a position deliver a consistent mentoring Professional Development package to individual schools.

A knowledge of the system, State and Federal requirements is essential for system-wide mentoring coordinators in the training of school-based mentoring coordinators and leaders in providing structured feedback to ECTs. The appointment of system-wise mentoring coordinator/s might lead to the creation of system-wide guidelines for supplying



school-based coordinator/s with resources in areas such as Providing Effective Feedback; the APST; Religious Education Accreditation requirements; and TRBWA registration.

The urgency of providing effective feedback to ECTs was highlighted by Meloney and Earp (2015), who stated,

Feedback is formally administered to Early Career Teachers weekly, although this can change depending on the progress they're making. It can also come from a variety of areas, including unscheduled 'pop-in' observations. (p. 2).

The fact that some mentors did not provide feedback to ECTs in Religious Education (Table 4.15), may have reflected their own current lack of knowledge about Religious Education, the state of their own faith life, or their understanding of Catholic Church teaching (Bishops of NSW and ACT, 2007). The importance of Religious Education for both ECTs and mentors was highlighted by Lovat (1989), who stated with reference to Fowler's theory of the stages of Faith development,

...faith is something that grows as a person grows... Good R.E. [Religious Education], then, requires more than goodwill and enthusiasm: it requires a keen sensitivity to the nature of growth and an inviolable respect for human freedom (p. 44).

The power of mentoring ECTs with regard to teaching Religious Education has been described by Harris (1991):

...the Holy Spirit is waiting to be summoned by teachers who are willing to take care, take steps, take form, take time and take risks. Outcomes can never be guaranteed, but the power of imagination is such that if it emerges from our lives, a fire is enkindled and begins to burn... A profound vocation, the vocation to teaching; a profound vocation, the vocation to religious imagination. For it can lead to incarnation, to revelation, and to the grace of power. And these in turn can lead to the re-creation of the world (p. 181).

The providing system-based support in the important areas noted above will likely strengthen Catholic education as a whole. It will show individuals that the system cares about them by providing the necessary support for helping them to engage in their vocation in an

effective manner. The BMF provides an integrated mechanism by which such support can be realized.

## **5. Influences on Mentoring Beginning Teachers from a Catholic Education**

### **Context.**

The study has shown that that the major influences on an ECT's transition to a Catholic school environment are the principal, school leaders, mentors (extrinsic factors) and the ECT's own resilience (intrinsic factor). Support from these sources reduces an ECT's sense of, alienation and inadequacy. As Woolfolk (1987) observed,

Teaching can be a lonely endeavour, Behind the classroom door, teachers are generally expected to solve their own problems. Even if help is available, teachers are given little time during the day to consult or plan with their colleagues...Beginning Teachers all over the world share many of the same concerns. Many teachers also experience what has been called "reality shock" when they take their first job and confront the "harsh and rude reality of classroom life (pp. 9, 12).

In influencing an ECT's sense of emotional well-being the BMF conceives of service learning modules. Service learning is an opportunity to deepen a sense of vocation to teach in a Catholic School and for ECTs to meet ECTs from other Catholic schools experiencing similar emotions to theirs. This point surfaced in the CUWA focus group interviews (Appendix H) where one intern commented on the value of a faith retreat,

There was one thing I know that A, B and I found and we went down to south and did a retreat there was a mix of ECE, Primary and Secondary teachers and we went down there just to basically learn how to run a retreat and just to have a bit of a getaway which was nice. But it was really good to know other people at the uni that you wouldn't necessarily have had the chance to meet them unless you'd went on this.

The research of Hackett and Lavery (2010) similarly found, after an analysis of service learning journals from pre-service teaching students at CUWA, that the experience of Christian service-learning offered a, "deeper appreciation of their teacher vocation through leadership, service, and retreat opportunities" (p. 7). The power of mentoring ECTs in their

vocation to teach has been powerfully described by Harris (1991), who stated, "...the Holy Spirit is waiting to be summoned by teachers who are willing to take care, take steps, take form, take time and take risks. Outcomes can never be guaranteed, but the power of imagination is such that if it emerges from our lives, a fire is enkindled and begins to burn..." (p. 181). The influences present in a Catholic school context ought to be such that ECTs can flourish in their vocation and profession. The BMF provides the framework to support such an ethos.

## **6. Implementing a School-based approach to a Beginning Teacher Mentoring Program.**

As has been argued throughout this thesis, funded school-based mentoring coordinators would be valuable school assets. In summary, the reasons for this are that they would:

- Receive specialist mentoring training and system-wide Mentoring Coordinator Accreditation;
- Secure on-going training to remain cognizant of the most recent developments in mentoring strategies;
- Be seen more broadly as specialists in the area of mentoring;
- Signal the importance of ECT mentoring;
- Relieve the principal of the immediate responsibility of providing an ECT mentoring program;
- Provide to the principal a school's mentoring progress report through each school's current ASIP and QCS documentation;
- Be responsible for creating a school-based mentoring program based on a system-wide mentoring framework which would be provided to them;
- Be the contact person for the system-based mentoring coordinator;
- Act as back-up people for other schools who may, for whatever reason, lose their coordinator;

- Help address teacher attrition by offering a positive early experience for Beginning Teachers;
- advance their own careers by being sought after by schools looking for trained mentoring coordinators.

The establishment of a school-based mentoring coordinator overseeing ECT mentoring in Accreditation to Teach Religious Education in a Catholic School, also finds support in the BMF. Such a responsibility would ensure that this first learning area (Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia, 2009) in Catholic schools is being taught in a competent and confident fashion. As the present research has shown, this is the area in which ECTs seems to struggle. Establishing the importance of this learning area via on-going mentoring resourcing would likely lead to an ongoing commitment to ensuring Religious Education and Faith Issues are kept at the forefront of Catholic education.

### **BMF Foundations Summary**

Conceptualising the BMF as a modified Bronfenbrenner (2016) concentric circle model enables the BMF to be presented in a visual and integrated fashion (Figure 5.5). The benefit of such a model was recognized by Rodriguez and Fitzpatrick (2014) who stated,

Many transition researchers have made use of Bronfenbrenner’s ecological systems theory to aid understandings of transitions...A systems approach can offer a space to juxtapose, for example, human development in context with socio-cultural theory and sociologies of childhood (p. 109).

A further advantage of a Bronfenbrenner-type conceptualisation is that most of the components of the six foundations can be turned into stand-alone modules for the training of school-based mentoring coordinators and through them, school-based mentors. The completion of these modules can lead to earning recognised system-based Mentoring Coordinator Accreditation. The importance of “mentoring our mentors” has been stressed by Whitaker and Fiore (2013),







Mentor teachers must understand what the role requires of them, and they must be willing to accept the myriad responsibilities that go along with mentoring ...Whether we're talking about a buddy teacher, a support teacher, a cooperating teacher, or a mentor, one thing is clear. Mentor teachers, to be most effective and contribute positively to a new teacher's development, must receive some type of formal training...we cannot assume that a teacher who performs well with children will be adept at teaching adults. Therefore, we need to start mentoring our mentors (pp. 139-140).

Mentoring is about more than helping and training others, it is also about the well-being of those who provide such support. Only those who see themselves as being competent and effective in their support role will feel a sense of professional and personal satisfaction. Mentors indeed need mentoring.



Figure 5.5. Borromeo Mentoring Framework: The main components of a wholistic and integrated mentoring framework for the Catholic education context. (See over for Legend<sup>1</sup>)

Note<sup>1</sup> Legend for BMF as shown in Figure

<i>LEGEND for the BMF;</i>	
	<i>1. Personal Formation and The Vocation to Teach in a Catholic School.</i>
	<i>2. Catholic Church Influences on current Mentoring Teachers.</i>
	<i>3. Current Influences affecting the Mentoring of Beginning Teachers in Catholic Education.</i>
	<i>4. Implementing a System Approach to Mentoring.</i>
	<i>5. Influences on Mentoring Beginning Teachers from a Catholic Education Context.</i>
	<i>6. Implementing a School based approach to a Beginning Teacher Mentoring Program</i>

In summary form, and presented for ease of reference, the following key roles are envisaged in the creation of the BMF,

*Mentoring Liaison Officer*

An appointed officer/s in charge of creating and providing modules for the ECT and mentoring programs. Their role is to liaise between CUWA and CEOWA and develop mentoring modules for mentors (which can be contextualized for individual school use).

*System-based Mentoring Coordinator*

The person/s employed by CEOWA to solicit relevant mentoring system-resources and programs of best-practice in CEOWA schools and support school in the program development.

*Principals and Leaders*

The person/s designated by the Archbishop of Perth or Bishops of Western Australia and employed by the CEOWA and individual school board to lead a school and provide mentoring oversight.

### *School Mentoring Coordinator*

The person nominated by each school's principal to act as an advocate liaising between the system-based mentoring coordinator, the school principals, the mentors and mentees. In time, incumbents will have to hold Mentoring Coordinator Accreditation.

### *Mentor and ECTs (mentees)*

The relationship between a more experienced teacher, commonly referred to as the mentor, and a younger inexperienced new employee, called the mentee or protégé. The role of the mentor has been described as one involving counseling, coaching, educating, inspiring, enriching, leading and advising the less experienced person (Boreen, Johnson, Niday & Potts, 2009; Nakamura, Shernoff & Hooker, 2009). Mentees (ECTs and pre-service interns) are encouraged to be active learners, be more aware of the learning needs of their children and be able to reflect with their mentor about how they can improve their educational practices (AITSL, 2012; Boreen, Johnson, Niday & Potts, 2009).

## **Summary of Chapter Five**

The Chapter has presented the principles identified in the data relating to specific subsidiary questions in each of the three cohorts involved in the study (Table 5.1), and presented the conclusions that formed the recommendation for a system-wide mentoring framework, The Borromeo Mentoring Framework (BMF) which has as its cornerstones six foundations:

1. Personal Formation and The Vocation to Teach in a Catholic School.
2. Catholic Church Influences on current Mentoring Teachers.
3. Current Influences affecting the Mentoring of Beginning Teachers in Catholic Education.
4. Implementing a System-based Approach to Mentoring.
5. Influences on Mentoring Beginning Teachers from a Catholic Education Context.
6. Implementing a School-based approach to a Beginning Teacher Mentoring Program.

The final Chapter will explore the key Conclusions and Recommendations raised in this study and suggest how the creation and implementation of the BMF mentoring program



might benefit leaders, mentors and ECTs currently working in Catholic Schools in Western Australia.

## CHAPTER 6

### CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this study was to identify and explore the mentoring experiences in the transition from graduate to Early Career Teacher (ECT), in selected Catholic primary and secondary schools in Western Australia. The study also explored the level of support ECTs were receiving and investigated the possibility that quality mentoring, with the assistance of leadership and system support, could assist Beginning Teachers to begin their professional journey with greater ease. The overall importance of providing mentoring and giving feedback to ECTs was highlighted by numerous authors as presented in the literature review chapter (for example, Hudson, Skamp & Brook, 2005; Jensen & Reichel, 2011; McNally & Blake, 2008, 2012).

The use of mixed methods in this study involved the combination of survey and focus group data being collected in three phases representing three cohorts (CUWA internship students; Beginning Teachers and principals) to determine the current state of mentoring in Western Australian Catholic education. The convergence of data in each of the three phases of the study led to key descriptors being identified and the subsequent appearance of ten conclusions, which were presented in chapter five. The study found that some 20% of Beginning Teachers were without a mentor for at least their first three terms of teaching. Where as mentor was present, the type of feedback provided differed markedly depending upon the commitment and personal attributes of the mentor. Feedback for pre-service teachers focused mainly on teaching and learning, and behaviour management within the context of social (informal) conversation. Although such emphases are important, the paucity of more formal and hence robust feedback often resulted in the novice not receiving an in-depth analysis of the multitudinous factors that might affect their transition for novice to

competent practitioner. Interestingly, both ECTs and school leaders ranked behaviour management and learning about school policies and procedures as key areas that needed to be considered during mentee debriefing sessions. Accordingly, when envisaging the creation of a mentoring program, these two areas would need to be included in both mentor and mentee training considerations. Consequently, the study concluded that further investigation was warranted on the types of feedback provided to ECTs, the format which debriefing sessions should be appropriate, and appropriate sequencing in terms of the coverage of content.

The study found that the feedback provided in the area of Religious Education was minimal, at best. An understanding needs to be fostered that through their own witness ECTs can be a significant influence on their students' understanding of Religious Education through their involvement in school prayer activities, Christian service programs, Mass attendance and involvement with wider parish sacramental celebrations. Again, additional investigation is required to address this deficit and to suggest how mentoring in Religious Education can be redressed, given that it is the priority learning area in Catholic schools. Further, it is considered that purposefully aimed system-based mentoring programs in Religious Education Accreditation for ECTs could further assist their formation to teach Religious Education.

It was found that ECT concerns about permanency and lack of information about how to achieve permanency contributed to early career dissatisfaction. For example, ECTs did not feel that they were supported by either the CEOWA or the school in understanding system-based continuing employment requirements; neither did feel that they were provided with sufficient information regarding APST standard. Currently, nearly 46% of ECTs indicated that they are without support in negotiating the APST and how these are related to seeking permanency. Any information that was available seemed even more difficult to access for those practicing in country schools. A related concern for those in country schools was that

geographical and contextual challenges meant that they often lacked confidence in their teaching and were less likely to receive mentoring opportunities in comparison to their city counterparts. Attending to concerns such as these might also enhance the recruitment of ECTs to country areas, and encourage them to stay longer.

It has been identified throughout this study that principals are a key stakeholder in implementing mentoring programs and many are doing so in conjunction with their School Improvement Plan. One principal in the focus group interview commented on the inherent value of mentoring Beginning Teachers to make them ultimately more self-reliant,

... one of the other things with the mentoring it seems like the mentoring goes for a couple of years or goes for a year and then stops. The one thing sometimes that you wish that was there was the networking between the people getting mentored. So that over time they almost become in control of their own personal growth and professional growth and keep those lines of communication open. So, it's no longer people mentoring them they are then sharing those experiences amongst themselves. **{Principal 12}**

Many principals envisaged a system-based framework that might assist them in mentoring their ECTs. Some principals noted that system-wide guidelines and support would assist them with funding a school-based mentoring co-ordinator. Currently, funding and providing time for mentoring is at the discretion of each school principal, and when money is tight, developing an effective mentoring program might not be seen as a high priority.

Encouragingly, the study found that some 25% of principals have already established the role of mentoring coordinator, so further commitment at a system-based level would likely boost this number much higher. The CEOWA could also capitalise on accessing the resources that already exist in 25% of Catholic schools. Collaboration between regional school leadership teams and the CEOWA in developing a school-based mentoring coordinator role, could potentially yield another benefits such as the development of on-line mentor training modules, mobile MASH units (Mentoring and Specialised Help) regional ECT support teams, online induction handbooks, and shared mentor/mentee assessment and engagement tasks.

All of these resources could then be linked to the APST and SCASA documentation to better inform ECTs in their career development. The suggestion was also made that in terms of workplace transition, such might be further enhanced through the creation of a liaison mentoring coordinator, independently employed by the Catholic Archbishop of Perth, through an educational agency such as the Catholic Institute of Western Australia.

The principles upon which a new mentoring framework might be developed, based on the findings from the present study, was proposed in the previous chapter. Such principles underpin a framework that could benefit Catholic Education Offices, principals, mentors and ECTs, through the introduction of both school and system-based mentoring protocols. The present research found that the lack of a system-wide framework for the mentoring of ECTs, the cessation of the current ECT program, and the lack of training for mentors, resulted in less than ideal mentoring experiences for ECTs. The data revealed that geographical complexities, types of feedback provided and aspirations of individual ECTs' all had a significant bearing on the ECT mentoring experience. The study identified four distinct mentoring experiences an ECT might encounter when they began their teaching career, namely,

- 1) The ECT is not assigned a mentor;
- 2) The ECT is assigned a mentor, however the relationship becomes fractured or non-existent;
- 3) The feedback provided is more of an informal nature; and
- 4) The ECT is provided with effective mentoring feedback emanating from a positive mentoring role model that positively influences the novice teacher.

Given that option four is clearly the preferable experience, the research findings were used to motivate a mentoring framework that might be utilized in Catholic education and beyond. An implication as a direct result of the research undertaken in this work which resulted in the

proposal of the BMF, may entail the author designing a future action research project to gather prospective data from ECTs, mentors and leaders about the influence, through the intervention of the BMF, on the teaching of Religious Education.

In summary, the major recommendation from this study is the development of a system-based program that supports school-based mentoring programs for ECTs. Such a program would be cognizant of the principles identified for developing a mentoring framework and would then utilize the framework for developing a mentoring program that delivers effective and sustainable mentoring experiences for ECTs. The program would then need to have scope for accommodating variation as determined by school context. It has been recommended that an accompanying training program for mentors be based on the on the Borromeo Mentoring Framework (BMF). The adoption of the BMF might lead to the desirable situation that has been identified by Sunde and Ulvik (2014), who declared,

Mentoring seems to hold the potential to transform the teaching profession, revitalise experienced teachers...it is thus not only beneficial for new teachers. Yet the influence of mentoring depends on the quality of the mentoring and on support from both the school culture and school leaders (p. 285).

In creating a platform for system-wide mentoring protocols, the BMF envisages the creation of three key mentoring support roles:

- An independent mentoring liaison officer linking the three educational arms of Catholic Education in Western Australia, the CEOWA, the CUWA, and Catholic schools;
- A CEOWA mentoring coordinator responsible for overseeing the development of a mentoring program for ECTs and mentors;
- A school-based mentoring coordinator responsible for localized mentor training and program evaluation.

Finally, and based on the study findings, the following recommendations are made:

- I. The creation of support personnel positions as identified in the three dot points above.
- II. The establishment of a mobile ECT MASH (Mentoring and Specialised Help) Unit. The quick deployment of such a team, could be used as a system-based support mechanism for principals having difficulty accessing experienced teachers to act as mentors for their ECTs, especially in the regional areas of Western Australia.
- III. The exploration of a specific unit of study by the CUWA, that has a focus on ECTs willing to teach and be mentored in country schools.
- IV. The examination by CEOWA of the current Head of Professional Practice Program (HOPP) unit at the CUWA, for the potential use of the program in the wider application of training mentors.
- V. The introduction of joint online and external learning modules by CEOWA, that could be used for both mentor and ECT training.
- VI. The creation of a network of regional mentoring coordinators, who once trained, instruct school-based mentoring coordinators on strategies for training individual school mentors. Such training may assist an ECT with their acquisition of key classroom competencies and be linked to the APST.
- VII. The establishment of a Notre Dame University (USA) style ACE training and mentoring program that could attract ECTs in hard to staff schools in Western Australia.
- VIII. The specific provision of Religious Education Accreditation programs that could be incorporated into a newly designed Early Career Training program; and

- IX. The creation of a CEOWA Teaching/Faith/Social (TFS) committee with an Executive formed from members of an Early Career Teacher program who meet with the Executive of the CEOWA to plan network opportunities for ECTs in teaching, faith and social areas.
- X. An investigation by a group sourced from CEOWA, CUWA and ECTs, of how mentoring is being conceived of in other countries, and how successful programs might be translated into the Western Australian Catholic school context.

At the heart of mentoring ECTs, is establishing and nurturing the personal vocation to teach which can be achieved by following in the footsteps of Jesus, as was highlighted by two influential Catholic Leaders. First, the present Catholic Archbishop of Western Australia, Timothy Costelloe, who summarised the importance of ECTs and Catholic Education,

It is both my hope and my aim that every Catholic school primary or secondary, and our Catholic University..., are places of educational excellence where our young people are provided with the very best education possible...I want them to be provided with the best facilities possible, with the most qualified and talented teachers and administrators available. I want them to be leaders in educational methods...I also want to say that our schools and our university cannot be and will not be all this if God is not the heart and soul of all our educational institutions (Costelloe, 2013, p. 7).

and second, Pope Francis who stated,

All utopias include not only a description of an ideal society but also an analysis of the mechanisms or strategies that could make the utopia possible. We could say that it is a projection into the future that tends to return to the present to take a vividly outlined shape and, then looks for the right mediations to make it a reality (Rossa, 2013, p. 60).

Successful education always begins with grand and noble visions. Effective mentoring of ECTs is a key way of making such visions a reality in Catholic schools.



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## Appendices

Appendix A: ..... Letter asking permission to collect data from CUWA Dean of Education.

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## **Appendix A**

### **Letter asking permission to collect data from CUWA Dean of Education.**

Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> October 2012

Dean of The School of Education  
The University of Notre Dame Australia  
Professor Michael O'Neill

Dear Michael,

Further to my Research Proposal presentation last Thursday, I am now seeking your approval with anticipation of ethics approval on October 23rd, to speak to and address the final year primary under graduate students. The purpose of obtaining their consent will be to collect data for this study through a focus group interview and also through an online survey questionnaire.

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "John Topliss". The signature is written in black ink on a white background.

John Topliss

## Appendix B

### Ethical Approval from CUWA.



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
NOTRE DAME  
AUSTRALIA

19 Mouat Street (PO Box 1225)  
Fremantle, Western Australia 6959

Telephone: +61 8 9433 0555

Facsimile: +61 8 9433 0544

Email: [enquiries@nd.edu.au](mailto:enquiries@nd.edu.au)

Internet: [www.nd.edu.au](http://www.nd.edu.au)

ABN: 69 330 643 210

CRICOS PROVIDER CODE: 01032F

5 November 2012

Mr John Topliss  
21 Gleeson Entrance  
Aveley WA 6069

Reference Number: 012082F

Dear John,

I am writing to you in regards to your Low Risk Ethical Review application for your proposed research to be undertaken as a student project at The University of Notre Dame Australia. The title of the project is: *"The mentoring of beginning teachers in Catholic schools in Western Australia."*

Your proposal has been reviewed by the University's Human Research Ethics Committee, and based on the information provided has been assessed as meeting all the requirements as mentioned in the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007)*. Therefore, I am pleased to advise that ethical clearance has been granted for this proposed study.

**All research projects are approved subject to standard conditions of approval. Please read the attached document for details of these conditions.**

On behalf of the Human Research Ethics Committee, I wish you well with what promises to be a most interesting and valuable study.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'N. Giles'.

Dr Natalie Giles  
Executive Officer, Human Research Ethics Committee  
Research Office

cc: Prof Richard Bertach, Supervisor, Research Office;  
Prof Michael O'Neill, Dean, School of Education;  
Prof Shane Lavery, SRC Chair, School of Education.

## Appendix C

### Letter seeking permission to approach Principals addressed to the CPPA President.

John Topliss  
21 Gleeson Ent  
Aveley WA  
6069

Mr Greg Ward  
CPPA President  
Principal  
Liwara Catholic Primary School  
Greenwood

Dear Greg,

The purpose of this research study is to identify key principles that underpin the role of mentoring in transitioning from undergraduate to Beginning Teachers in Catholic Primary Schools in Western Australia. Obviously, the role the Principal plays in this process is critical to the on-going professional learning, mentoring and development of Early Career Teachers as part of The Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership Frame-work(AITSL).

When one considers the potential positive impact a teacher should have on the learning of their students, the establishment of a mentoring program is seen as one critical factor in raising both the professional standing of teaching in society and improving the learning experiences of students (Jensen, Hunter, Sonnemann & Burns, 2012).

Currently there is no framework for the mentoring of Early Career Teachers in the Catholic education system in Western Australia. This study is vital in assisting a growth in research in recent years that has recognized the increasing role mentoring plays especially in the key formative stages of an early career teachers' transition from undergraduate to Beginning Teacher (McNally, 2008; Moir, 2010; Watt & Richardson, 2011).

As facilitator of this study, I have written and gained permission with ethical clearance from both the Director of Catholic Education WA and the Dean of

Education to conduct this study. I am asking your support as CPPA President to send a link for Principals to complete the one online survey.

It is important to stress that information collected during the online survey and/or focus group will be strictly confidential. All participants may withdraw from the project at any time. No identifying information will be used and the results from the study will be made freely available to all participants. This confidence will only be broken in the instance of legal requirements such as court subpoenas, freedom of information requests or mandated reporting by some professionals

To protect personal data and information collected for this study using the Survey Monkey tool, encryption and survey settings will be changed so that respondent's IP addresses are not saved or kept in any way. Also a copy of the anonymous questionnaire data, will only be accessed by the main researcher via a password protected site on Survey Monkey. Descriptive statistical analysis will be undertaken of the survey questionnaire data, where anonymous data collected can only be accessed by me and will be stored on a password protected computer. This survey data will provide basic statistical and numerical information in relation to the participants current mentoring experience/s

Data collected from the Focus Group will be first coded and then entered for analysis using the Dedoose analysis web-site. Dedoose's data centre certification ensures compliance with NIST, HIPAA, SOX, and GLBA and is the most stringent professional security audit available. Virtual access security is accomplished in multiple steps including a private VPN connection to order to manage the servers with a separate authentication combination for the VPN, as well as through each server (taken from Dedoose.com). Any further records from the data collection phase, will then be stored securely in the University's School of Education for five years.

I am happy to meet with you to discuss any queries you have.

Yours sincerely



John Topliss

November 20 2012

## Appendix D

### Ethical Approval from CEOWAWA.

Our Ref:



CATHOLIC EDUCATION  
OFFICE OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

7 November 2012

Mr John Topliss  
c/- Professor Richard Berlach  
School of Education  
The University of Notre Dame Australia  
PO Box 1225  
FREMANTLE WA 6069

Dear John

**RE: MENTORING BEGINNING TEACHERS IN CATHOLIC SCHOOLS IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA**

Thank you for your completed application received 21 August 2012, whereby this project will examine the mentoring experiences of final year UNDA, Early Childhood Education ECE and Primary Education students in Catholic schools after the completion of their final "internship". This study will also explore the initial six month mentoring experiences and aspirations of beginning ECE and primary teachers embarking on their careers in Catholic schools in Western Australia.

I give in principle support for the selected Catholic schools in Western Australia to participate in this valuable study. However, consistent with CEOWA policy, participation in your research project will be the decision of the individual principal and staff members.

Responsibility for quality control of ethics and methodology of the proposed research resides with the institution supervising the research. The CEOWA notes that the University of Notre Dame Australia Human Research Ethics Committee has granted permission for the duration of this research project (Reference Number: 012082F).

Any changes to the proposed methodology will need to be submitted for CEOWA approval prior to implementation. The focus and outcomes of your research project are of interest to the CEOWA. It is therefore a condition of approval that the research findings of this study are forwarded to the CEOWA.

Further enquiries may be directed to Tanya Davies at [davies.tanya@ceowawa.edu.au](mailto:davies.tanya@ceowawa.edu.au) or (08) 6380 5379.

I wish you all the best with your research.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Tim McDonald  
Director of Catholic Education

50 Ruksip Street, Leederville WA 6007 PO Box 198, Leederville WA 6903 T (08) 6380 5200 F (08) 9381 3201  
E [ceowa@ceowawa.edu.au](mailto:ceowa@ceowawa.edu.au) W [ceowawa.edu.au](http://ceowawa.edu.au) ABN 97 264 688 522

## Appendix E

### Participant Information Sheet provided to all Participants in all 3 Phases of this Study.



## INFORMATION SHEET

Dear potential participant,

My name is John Topliss. I am a student at The University of Notre Dame Australia (UNDA) and I am enrolled as a PhD candidate. The title of my project is *Mentoring Beginning Teachers in Catholic Schools*. This research project will specifically examine the mentoring experiences of final year UNDA, Early Childhood Education and Care and Primary Education students in Catholic schools after the completion of their final qualifying practicum – Internship (ATP). This study will also explore the initial six month mentoring experiences and aspirations of beginning ECE and primary teachers embarking on careers in Catholic schools in Western Australia. It will also gather the current perceptions of mentoring from Catholic Primary Principals. It is hoped this research study will assist in providing information to develop an effective teacher mentoring program.

Participants will be invited to take part in an online survey and nominate to take part in a 50-60 minute focus group discussion interview. Information collected during the online survey and/or focus group will be strictly confidential. This confidence will only be broken in the instance of legal requirements such as court subpoenas, freedom of information requests or mandated reporting by some professionals. To protect the privacy of participants, a code will be ascribed to each of the participants to minimise the risk of identification.



The protocol adopted by the UNDA Human Research Ethics Committee for the protection of privacy will be adhered to and relevant sections of the Privacy Act are available at <http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/>

You will be offered a transcript of the survey questions/interview, and I would be grateful if you would comment on whether you believe we have captured your experience.

Before the Focus Group interview I will ask you to sign a consent form. You may withdraw from the project at any time.

Data collected will be stored securely in the University's School of Education for five years. No identifying information will be used and the results from the study will be made freely available to all participants.

The Human Research Ethics Committee of the University has approved the study.

Professor Richard Berlach of the School of Education is supervising the project. If you have any queries regarding the research, please contact me directly or Professor Berlach by phone (08) 9433 0151 or by email at [richard.berlach@nd.edu.au](mailto:richard.berlach@nd.edu.au)

I thank you for your consideration and hope you will agree to participate in this research project.

Yours sincerely,

Mr John Topliss

Tel: 0417174097

Email: [john.topliss1@my.nd.edu.au](mailto:john.topliss1@my.nd.edu.au)

*If participants have any complaint regarding the manner in which a research project is conducted, it should be directed to the Executive Officer of the Human Research Ethics Committee, Research Office, The University of Notre Dame Australia, PO Box 1225 Fremantle WA 6959, phone (08) 9433 0943, [research@nd.edu.au](mailto:research@nd.edu.au)*

## Appendix F

### Informed Consent Form provided to all Participants in all 3 Phases of this Study.



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
**NOTRE DAME**  
A U S T R A L I A

## CONSENT FORM

### “MENTORING BEGINNING TEACHERS IN CATHOLIC SCHOOLS”


## Informed Consent Form

I, (*participant's name*) \_\_\_\_\_ hereby agree to being a participant in the above research project.

- I have read and understood the Information Sheet about this project and any questions have been answered to my satisfaction.
- I understand that I may withdraw from participating in the project at any time without prejudice.
- I understand that all information gathered by the researcher will be treated as strictly confidential, except in instances of legal requirements such as court subpoenas, freedom of information requests, or mandated reporting by some professionals.
- Whilst the research involves small sample sizes I understand that a code will be ascribed to all participants to ensure that the risk of identification is minimised.

- I understand that the protocol adopted by the University Of Notre Dame Australia Human Research Ethics Committee for the protection of privacy will be adhered to and relevant sections of the *Privacy Act* are available at <http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/>
- I agree that any research data gathered for the study may be published provided my name or other identifying information is not disclosed.

<b>PARTICIPANT'S SIGNATURE:</b>		<b>DATE:</b>	
-------------------------------------	--	--------------	--

<b>RESEARCHER'S FULL NAME:</b>	JOHN WAYNE TOPLISS		
<b>RESEARCHER'S SIGNATURE:</b>		<b>DATE:</b>	

*If participants have any complaint regarding the manner in which a research project is conducted, it should be directed to the Executive Officer of the Human Research Ethics Committee, Research Office, The University of Notre Dame Australia, PO Box 1225 Fremantle WA 6959, phone (08) 9433 0943, email [research@nd.edu.au](mailto:research@nd.edu.au)*

## Appendix G

### CUWA Survey on Survey Monkey.

Mentoring Beginning Teachers in Catholic Schools J.Topliss

#### 1. John Topliss PhD Mentoring Study

November 2012

Dear Participant, This survey is part of my PhD initial study to ascertain what school based mentoring occurs in the Catholic Education system in Western Australia. I would appreciate you taking 10-15 minutes to complete this survey. The survey results are confidential and no names will be used in any way.

Many thanks for your help. Regards John Topliss

PhD student The University of Notre Dame Australia

1. Before completing this questionnaire, it is necessary for you to give consent To this survey being completed. A “Yes” response will allow you to continue to complete the survey. A “No” response will terminate the survey.

At no stage will the person completing this survey be personally identified in any way. Regardless of your response thank-you for your consideration.

I agree to complete this questionnaire as accurately as I can. I understand that information will be used for educational purposes and at no stage will my personal information be publicized. Yes/ No

#### 2. Gender

Female /Male

#### 3. Describe what your degree was in?

Early Childhood Education (ECE)

Primary Education

4. Can you please describe the general location of the school where you are employed?

City/Country

5. How did your school provide feedback to you about your teaching?

-Through a Mentor

-Through the Principal

- Through an Assistant Principal

-Through the University Supervisor

-Through another teacher

-They don't

-Other (please specify)

6. Was the majority of this feedback related to your understanding of :

-Teaching and Learning

-School Procedures

-Classroom Management

-Religious Education teaching

-Faith Issues

-Developing better interpersonal skills with students and parents

7. Did your school have a mentoring program for Beginning Teachers?

Yes/ No

8. Were you assigned a mentor at your current school whilst on ATP/Internship?

Yes/ No

9. What areas of conversation did you cover with your mentor?

-Sharing of teaching ideas

-Social chat Informal Work/Life

- general well-being discussion
- Ways of improving learning in the classroom
- Discipline strategies
- Communication strategies with parents and students
- Other (please specify)

10. How much time per week have you been allocated to spend with your mentor?

- None
- 10-55 minutes per week
- 1-2 hours per week
- 2 or more hours per week
- Whenever and wherever it is required

11. Was the time you spend with your mentor held during:

- During my Mentor's DOTT (Duties Other Than Teaching) time
- Whenever we find can some time
- Before or after school Lunchtime/Recess

12. In the following areas what level of support did you get from your mentor teacher?

Neither Satisfied or Highly Satisfied ;Satisfied; Dissatisfied; Highly Dissatisfied

Pastorally	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Teaching Ideas	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Communication strategies with parents, staff and students	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Classroom Management	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Emotionally	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Extra time	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Extra help	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

13. In the following areas what level of support did you get from your supervisor?

Neither Satisfied or Dissatisfied; Highly Satisfied; Satisfied; Dissatisfied; Highly Dissatisfied.

Pastorally	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Teaching Ideas	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Communication strategies with parents, staff and students	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Classroom Management	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Emotionally	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Extra time	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Extra help	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

14. Which three characteristics from your own teaching experience are essential for a mentor to possess?

15. What types of school programs or teacher support were most helpful to you in your first weeks of Internship/ATP ?

-Faith, Story and Witness

- PLC meetings

-Shared Mentor/Mentee time

-University course preparation

-Buddy teacher

-Beginning Teacher Network Meetings

-Formal Induction meeting outlining school procedures and policies

-Extra DOTT [Duties Other Than Teaching] to meet with a mentor

-Catholic Education Office Accreditation workshop/s Monitored observation by a peer teacher

-Chat time with Principal

-Chat time with Assistant Principal Chat time with a Mentor

-Other (please specify)

16. In the spaces below please describe the benefits of the mentoring experiences you have had in Catholic Education either on ATP/Internship or as a Beginning Teacher ?

17. Did your experiences with your mentor assist you with your teaching? Yes No

18. From your own experience, how has mentoring benefitted or hindered your teaching?

19. Who would you be more inclined to ask to be a mentor and help you teach more effectively?

-An Assistant Principal

-The University Supervisor

-The Principal

-A fellow class teacher in the same school

-A teacher at another school Other (please specify)

20. How could a mentoring program benefit your aspirations for your teaching career?

21. What are your aspirations for your future in teaching?

22. If you would like to participate in the follow-up focus group interview, please leave your email address and contact details in the space below. It is hoped to hold this Focus Group Interview, during the week after examinations.

Thank-you for taking the time to complete this survey.



## Appendix H

### CUWA Focus Group Interview Script.

#### CUWA Script

Time Allotment	Dialogue:	Organisation:
2-5 minutes	<p><b>GREETINGS/WELCOME</b> Welcome and thank everyone for volunteering for this focus group. Tell participants where the toilets/ emergency exits are.</p>	
5 minutes	<p><b>INTRODUCTION:</b> Welcome to this Mentoring Beginning teachers' focus group. Thanks for agreeing to take part in this study. The research shows that mentoring can positively assist the overall teaching experience of under graduate and Beginning Teachers and can provide the mentor and mentee with valuable life and career skills. Your participation will assist in gathering data about what aspects of mentoring are currently carried out during Internship.</p>	<p>Name badges Methods of recording conversation</p>
5 minutes	<p><b>INTRODUCTORY TASKS.</b> Give name tags at door. Ask participants to introduce themselves with their name, school and grade(s) where they teach etc. and share something interesting about themselves with the person next to them.</p>	<p>WARM - Up starter</p>
5 minutes	<p><b>PURPOSE</b> The purpose of this session is to discover what lessons can be learnt from the mentoring experience and how this learning can be applied to the development of an effective mentoring program in a Catholic School for Under graduate teachers.</p>	<p>I will compile summary results from this session into a report and makes key recommendations to The CEOWAWA and UNDA. If you would like a copy of the report, at the end of this session today, we will have a form for you to fill out.</p>
	<p><b>PROVIDING A CONTEXT FOR THIS RESEARCH:</b> Overview, Background, Participants' Selection, Their Roles. This study is investigating the mentoring of under graduate and Beginning Teachers. As a result It Is hoped to Identify common themes to be used when devising a mentoring program to assist Under graduate and Beginning Teachers. These lessons can then be applied to assist the career aspirations of future Beginning Teachers.</p>	<p>Participant selection - How were you chosen? Opportunity to speak to under graduates and Letters soliciting participants were sent to UNDA asking for consent.</p>

	<p><b>Participants role today</b> - Our discussion today focuses on your own mentoring experiences after you've completed your Internship in a Catholic school.</p> <p>1) Please speak from your own experience and knowledge.</p> <p>2) You are not expected to act like experts.</p> <p>3) Feel free to give your opinions. There are no wrong answers.</p> <p>4) At times we may go around the table asking for input.</p> <p>5) One person will speak at a time. If you are waiting for your turn to speak or want to note some thoughts, please use the paper and pen provided to take notes.</p> <p>I will be the interviewer/facilitator. I will be asking the questions.</p>	
	<p>There may be a person taking notes and keeping track of time. As back-up, the conversation will be tape recorded. No names will be used in the final report. Does anyone have any objections?</p>	<p>Possible research assistant or MP4 / tape recorder</p>
	<b><i>QUESTIONS</i></b>	<b><i>POSSIBLE FOLLOW UP QUESTIONS</i></b>
5-10 minutes	<p><b>QUESTION 1</b> Were you assigned a mentor when you first entered your Internship?</p>	<p>When and What did the initial contact entail when you met with your mentor? Were you all in Catholic or State schools for your placements.</p>
5-10 minutes	<p><b>QUESTION 2</b> This question asks you to reflect on your first experiences of your school community : How did you go about finding resources in your school to assist you with your first days of teaching. Whom did you find most helpful in settling you into the workplace?</p>	<p>If a person has no mentor who is the person they approach for assistance?</p>
5-10 minutes	<p><b>QUESTION 3</b> How did the mentor/s assist you or hinder you in your progress?</p>	<p>Why is this working so well/ not working? Do they assist you in all learning areas or just RE?</p>
5-10 minutes	<p><b>QUESTION 4</b> In your career so far what aspects of the mentoring process have assisted you to begin a professional development plan for your future teaching career?</p>	<p>What do you aspire to become and how is your mentor assisting you in your professional development ?</p>
5-10 minutes	<p><b>QUESTION 5</b> Did the Professional development or PLC Staff meetings you were involved in your first weeks at your school assist you in settling into your new environment?</p>	<p>How have PLC's/ Staff meetings assisted you in your teaching and helping students to learn more effectively? Can you provide me with some examples?</p>
5-10 minutes	<p><b>QUESTION 6</b> What were the key characteristics that make up the mentoring experience for you in your school?</p>	<p>How much time is given to this mentoring per week/term?</p>
5-10 minutes	<p><b>QUESTION 7</b> How could the implementation of a mentoring program be better implemented in your school for the future?</p>	<p>If it is working well what characteristics make it that way? If there is no mentoring program what could be done? What are your suggestions for a good Mentoring program when you begin Teaching next year?</p>

5 minutes

**CONCLUSION**

Following this session, I will summarize your comments into a report and make key recommendations to the CEOWAWA and UNDA. In the report, you will not be quoted by name and your name will not appear in any printed materials. If you are interested in receiving a report, please leave your email address on the form supplied  
Thank you John Topliss

## Appendix I

### Principal Survey on Survey Monkey.

Principal Copy Mentoring Beginning Teachers in Catholic Schools J.Topliss

John Topliss PhD Mentoring Study

January 2013

Dear Principal,

This survey is part of my PhD initial study to ascertain what school based mentoring occurs in the Catholic Education system in Western Australia. I would appreciate you taking 10-15 minutes to complete this survey. The survey results are confidential and no names will be used in any way.

Many thanks for your help.

Regards John Topliss

(PhD candidate The University of Notre Dame Australia)

1. Before completing this questionnaire, it is necessary for you to give consent To this survey being completed. A “Yes” response will allow you to continue to complete the survey. A “No” response will terminate the survey. At no stage will the person completing this survey be personally identified in any way. Regardless of your response thank-you for your consideration.

I agree to complete this questionnaire as accurately as I can. I understand that information will be used for educational purposes and at no stage will my personal information be publicized. Yes/ No

2. Gender

Female/ Male

3. Who at your school provides feedback to a beginning teacher?

A Mentoring coordinator, The Principal, An Assistant Principal, A delegated class teacher, There is no formal protocol of assigning feedback to Beginning Teachers in this school, Other (please specify).

4. Is the majority of this feedback related to the Beginning Teachers understanding of :

- Teaching and Learning
- School Procedures
- Classroom Management
- Religious Education teaching
- Faith Issues Effective
- communication strategies with staff, parents and children
- Other (please specify)

5. Do you have an appointed staff member who supervises the mentoring of Beginning Teachers? Yes No

6. Does your school have a mentoring program ? Yes/ No  
Other (please specify)

7. What is the selection criteria for choosing a mentor at your school?

8. How much time per week do you allocate for a mentor to spend with a Beginning Teacher? None 1-2 hours per week 2 or more hours per week Whenever and wherever it is required

9. What types of considerations at the school level are essential for you to consider, when planning to assist a Beginning Teacher with a mentor?

- Allocation in the budget of ongoing Professional Development funding
- Shared release time (DOTT) Financial incentive/s
- Increased time for planning Time-tabling
- Other (please specify)

10. Which three characteristics from your own teaching experience are essential for a mentor to possess when dealing with a Beginning Teacher?

11. What types of strategies do you utilize with a Beginning Teacher in their first weeks of teaching?

- Faith, Story and Witness
- PLC meetings
- Shared Mentor/Mentee time
- Buddy teacher
- Beginning Teacher Network Meetings

- Formal Induction meeting outlining school procedures and policies
- Extra DOTT to meet with a mentor
- Catholic Education Office Accreditation workshop/s
- Monitored supervision Chat time with Principal
- Chat time with Assistant Principal Chat time with a Mentor
- Other (please specify)

12. Which of these types of school programs (from Q.11) or teacher support do you believe are essential for assisting a Beginning Teacher in their first two years of teaching?

13. How can the implementation of a mentoring program benefit a Beginning Teacher?

14. Who would you be more inclined to ask, to mentor a Beginning Teacher in your school ?

- A buddy teacher in a similar class
- An Assistant Principal
- An experienced teacher in the same school
- A teacher at another school
- Other (please specify)

15. If your school already implements an effective Mentoring program for Beginning Teachers would you please indicate what key ingredients make it a successful program and be kind enough to provide contact details and the location of the school for possible follow up.

Thank-you for taking the time to complete this survey.

## Appendix J

### Principal Focus Group Interview Script.

Principals

**Script**

Time Allotment	Dialogue:	Organisation:
2-5 minutes	<p><b>GREETINGS/WELCOME</b>            Welcome and thank everyone for volunteering for this focus group. Tell participants where the toilets/ emergency exits are. First and Foremost thanks for giving up your time. As you know I'm have just commenced LSL and am in my 4<sup>th</sup> year of my PhD studies on Mentoring Beginning Teachers' focus group.</p>	
5 minutes	<p><b>INTRODUCTION:</b>            Welcome to this Mentoring Beginning Teachers' focus group. Thanks for agreeing to take part in this study. The research shows that mentoring can positively assist the overall teaching experience of under graduate and Beginning Teachers and can provide the mentor and mentee with valuable life and career skills. Your participation will assist in gathering data about what aspects of mentoring are currently carried out in your work-place.</p>	Name badges  Methods of recording conversation
5 minutes	<p><b>INTRODUCTORY TASKS.</b> Give name tags at door            Ask participants to introduce themselves with their name, school and grade(s) where they teach etc. and share something interesting about themselves with the person next to them.</p>	WARM - Up starter
5 minutes	<p><b>PURPOSE</b>            The purpose of this session is to better enable what lessons can be learnt from the mentoring experience from a Principals perspective and how can this learning be applied toward the development of an effective mentoring program in a Catholic School for Beginning Teachers</p>	I will compile summary results from this session into a report and makes key recommendations to The CEOWAWA and UNDA.  If you would like a copy of the report, at the end of this session today,

		we will have a form for you to fill out.
	<p><b>PROVIDING A CONTEXT FOR THIS RESEARCH:</b>  Overview, Background, Participants' Selection, Their Roles. This study is investigating the mentoring of Beginning Teachers and as a result It Is hoped to Identify common themes to be used when devising a mentoring program to assist Beginning Teachers. These lessons can then be applied to assist the career aspirations of future Beginning Teachers.</p>	Participant selection - How were you chosen? Letters soliciting participants were sent to Catholic Primary Principals. Also e-mails were sent to specific participants from their participation in The Accreditation to Work in a Catholic School work-shop.
	<p><b>Participants role today</b> - Our discussion today focuses on your own mentoring experiences since you started in Catholic Education.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Please speak from your own experience and knowledge.</li> <li>2) You are not expected to act like experts.</li> <li>3) Feel free to give your opinions. There are no wrong answers.</li> <li>4) At times we may go around the table asking for input.</li> <li>5) One person will speak at a time. If you are waiting for your turn to speak or want to note some thoughts, please use the paper an pen provided to take notes.</li> </ol> <p>I will be the interviewer/facilitator. I will be asking the questions.</p>	Please make sure you have signed the University of Notre Dame consent papers.
	<p>There may be a person taking notes and keeping track of time. As back-up, the conversation will be tape recorded. No names will be used in the final report. Does anyone have any objections?</p>	Possible research assistant or MP4 / tape recorder



	<b><i>QUESTIONS</i></b>	<b><i>POSSIBLE FOLLOW UP QUESTIONS</i></b>
5-10 minutes	<b>QUESTION 1</b> Do you think that a mentoring program should be school or system driven? Why?	General benefits?
5-10 minutes	<b>QUESTION 2</b> What system-based issues might/do you face in developing a mentoring program in Catholic schools?	System issues-elaborate?
5-10 minutes	<b>QUESTION 3</b> What do you think of current CEOWAWA leadership programs and how they cater for meeting the needs of mentoring particularly towards Beginning Teachers?	Is his working well-how do they assist? If not- what is the issue?
5-10 minutes	<b>QUESTION 4</b> Do you think the CEOWAWA trial program for Beginning Teachers is helpful or are there other ways of assisting them? If so how could this be achieved?	Benefits of ECT program ?
5-10 minutes	<b>QUESTION 5</b> Should schools have their own policies/procedures for Beginning Teachers?	System/School support?
5-10 minutes	<b>QUESTION 6</b> From your experience, describe what works best for mentoring Beginning Teachers at your own school level?	What are some of the benefits of a mentoring program?
10-15 minutes	<b>QUESTION 7</b> Would you classify mentoring and leadership programs as essential for a teacher beginning in a your school? What would you include in such a program?  <b>QUESTION 8</b> What issues might/do you face in developing a mentoring program in your school?  <b>QUESTION 9</b> What structures do you need to consider in supporting beginning classroom teachers in your school?  <b>QUESTION 10</b> In your experience, what are the key components found in a successful Beginning Teacher?	What are some programs that worked well for you? Associated issues Your own experiences-elaborate.

5 minutes

**CONCLUSION**

Following this session, I will summarize your comments into a report and make key recommendations to the CEOWAWA and UNDA. In the report, you will not be quoted by name and your name will not appear in any printed materials. If you are interested in receiving a report, please leave your email address on the form supplied  
Thank you so much for your time and assistance

Thank you John Topliss

## Appendix K

### Beginning Teachers Survey: March/April 2013.

#### Mentoring Beginning Teachers in Catholic Schools J.Topliss

##### 1. John Topliss PhD Mentoring Study

March/April 2013

Dear Participant, This survey is part of my PhD initial study to ascertain what school based mentoring occurs in the Catholic Education system in Western Australia. I would appreciate you taking 10-15 minutes to complete this survey. The survey results are confidential and no names will be used in any way.

Many thanks for your help.

Regards John Topliss

PhD student The University of Notre Dame Australia

1. Before completing this questionnaire, it is necessary for you to give consent To this survey being completed. A “Yes” response will allow you to continue to complete the survey. A “No” response will terminate the survey. At no stage will the person completing this survey be personally identified in any way. Regardless of your response thank-you for your consideration.

I agree to complete this questionnaire as accurately as I can. I understand that information will be used for educational purposes and at no stage will my personal information be publicized. Yes/ No

##### 2. Gender

Female/ Male

3. Which University did you attend for your teacher training?

The Catholic University of Australia

The University of Western Australia

Murdoch University

Edith Cowan University

Curtin University

Other

4. Please place a cross tick the box that best describes your teaching role as a:

I'm currently in My First Year of Teaching

-I'm currently in My Second Year of Teaching

-I'm currently in My Third Year of Teaching

5. Describe what your degree was in?

Early Childhood Education (ECE)

Primary Education

Secondary Education

6. Can you please describe the general location of the school where you are employed?

City / Country

7. How does your school provide feedback to you about your teaching?

-Through a Mentor

-Through the Principal

- Through an Assistant Principal

- Through another teacher

- They don't

- Other (please specify)

8. Is the majority of the feedback pertaining to (Qn.7) related to your understanding of:

- Teaching and Learning
- School Procedures
- Classroom Management
- Religious Education teaching
- Faith Issues
- Developing better interpersonal skills with students and parents

9. Does your school have a mentoring program for graduate teachers?

Yes/ No

10. Have you been assigned a mentor at your current school?

Yes/ No

11. Which of the areas below are covered in conversation with your mentor?

- Sharing of teaching ideas
- Social chat Informal Work/Life
- general well-being discussion
- Ways of improving learning in the classroom
- Discipline strategies
- Communication strategies with parents and students

Other (please specify)

12. How much time per week have you been allocated to spend with your mentor?

None

1-2 hours per week

2 or more hours per week

Whenever and wherever it is required

13. The time you spent with your mentor is held during:

-Shared DOTT time

-During my DOTT time

-During my Mentor's DOTT time

-Whenever we find can some time Before or after school

14. What support do you get from your mentor? (if applicable)

	Highly satisfied	Satisfied	Neither Satisfied or Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Highly Dissatisfied
Pastorally	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Teaching Ideas	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Communication strategies with parents, staff and students	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Classroom Management	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Emotionally	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Extra time	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Extra help	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

15. Which three characteristics from your own teaching experience are essential for a mentor to possess?

16. Which of the following (related to school programs or teacher support) were most helpful to you in your first month of teaching?

- Faith, Story and Witness
- PLC meetings Shared Mentor/Mentee time
- Buddy teacher
- Beginning Teacher Network Meetings
- Formal Induction meeting outlining school procedures and policies
- Extra DOTT to meet with a mentor
- Catholic Education Office Accreditation workshop/s
- Monitored observation by a peer teacher Chat time with Principal

Chat time with Assistant Principal Chat time with a Mentor

Other (please specify)

17. In the spaces below describe the benefits of the mentoring experiences you have had in Catholic Education either on ATP/Internship or as a Beginning Teacher ?

18. Do your experiences with your mentor assist you with your teaching? Yes No

19. From your own experience, how has mentoring benefitted and/or hindered your teaching?

20. Who would you be more inclined to be a teaching mentor?

-An Assistant Principal

-The Principal

-A fellow class teacher in the same school

-A teacher at another school

-Other (please specify)

21. What are your aspirations for your future in teaching?

22. How could a mentoring program benefit your aspirations for a teaching career?

Thank-you for taking the time to complete this survey.

## Appendix L

### Beginning Teachers Survey: August/September 2013.

#### Mentoring Beginning Teachers in Catholic Schools J.Topliss

##### 1. John Topliss PhD Mentoring Study -2013/ 2014

AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2013

Dear Participant, This final survey is part of my PhD initial study to ascertain what school based mentoring occurs in the Catholic Education system in Western Australia. I would appreciate you taking 10-15 minutes to complete this survey. The survey results are confidential and no names will be used in any way. Many thanks for your help. Regards John Topliss Assistant Principal St Anthony's Wanneroo PhD student The University of Notre Dame Australia

1. Before completing this questionnaire, it is necessary for you to give consent To this survey being completed. A “Yes” response will allow you to continue to complete the survey. A “No” response will terminate the survey.

At no stage will the person completing this survey be personally identified in any way. Regardless of your response thank-you for your consideration.

I agree to complete this questionnaire as accurately as I can. I understand that information will be used for educational purposes and at no stage will my personal information be publicized. Yes/ No

##### 2. Gender



Female/ Male

3. Which University did you attend for your teacher training?

The Catholic University of Western Australia

The University of Western Australia

Murdoch University

Edith Cowan University

Curtin University

Other

4. Describe what your degree was in?

Early Childhood Education (ECE)

Primary Education

Secondary Education

5. Can you please describe the general location of the school where you are employed?

City/Country

6. Does your school have a school policy/procedure for Beginning Teachers?

Yes/No

Other (please specify)

7. Have you been engaged in a mentoring program in your school this year? Yes

No Other (please specify)

8. Do you think your mentoring experience may be improved at your school? If so, how?

9. Could the CEOWA have better assisted you better, in your journey as a Beginning Teacher? If so, how?

10. What tensions or problems did you find in your first 6 months of teaching, if any?

11. How has mentoring assisted you with your teaching so far this year?

12. What advice assisted you the most from a mentor/peer?

13. What characteristics did your mentor exhibit, that you found to be most beneficial ?

14. Has your perception of the Mentoring process since the beginning of the year, changed your teaching in any way? If so how?

15. At which stage of this year, did you require the most assistance from your mentor ?

-Before School had started

-During First Term

-During Second Term

- During Third Term

- During the School Holidays

I didn't require their assistance In the space below why was the mentor most required at this time?

16. Which areas below, best describe the types of feedback given to you this year, by your mentor?

- Exchange of Teaching Ideas

- Social conversation

- Religious Education Critique of my teaching

- AITSL standards Accreditation

- Manner of Life

- Communication strategies with parents, staff and students

- Classroom Management

- Reporting advice

- Extra help

Other (please specify)

17. Have you had any indication from your school leadership team or Mentor about your status as a teacher relating to the AITSL standards and/or your permanency as a teacher?

Yes/ No

Other (please specify)

18. Which phrases below, best describe your teaching journey this year:

- A complete learning curve.
- Controlling a range of emotions.
- Learning how to work with other teachers and staff.
- Learning new procedures.
- Learning new teaching methods. –
- Learning new class management strategies.
- Learning about report systems.
- Learning about my own faith.
- Other (please specify)

19. Do you think you will choose to stay in teaching for at least the next five years? Yes/ No

Other (please specify)

How could your teacher training at university better have assisted you to prepare for your career as a teacher?

Do you have a permanent or temporary position at present? Is this at the same school as you were?

Thank-you for taking the time to complete this survey.

## Appendix M

### Beginning Teachers Focus Group Interview: March/April 2013.

#### **MENTORING**

#### Script

<b>Time Allotment</b>	<b>Dialogue:</b>	<b>Organisation:</b>
2-5 minutes	<b>GREETINGS/WELCOME</b> Welcome and thank everyone for volunteering for this focus group. Tell participants where the toilets/ emergency exits.	
5 minutes	<b>INTRODUCTION:</b> Welcome to this Mentoring Beginning Teachers' focus group. Thanks for agreeing to take part in this study. The research shows that mentoring can positively assist the overall teaching experience of under-graduate and Beginning Teachers and can provide the mentor and mentee with valuable life and career skills. Your participation will assist in gathering data about what aspects of mentoring are currently carried out in your work-place.	Name badges Methods of recording conversation
5 minutes	<b>INTRODUCTORY TASKS.</b> Give name tags at door. Ask participants to introduce themselves with their name, school and grade(s) where they teach etc. and share their favourite movie/ sportstar or something about themselves with the person next to them.	WARM - Up starter
5 minutes	<b>PURPOSE</b> The purpose of this session is to better enable what lessons can be learnt from the mentoring experience and how can this learning be applied toward the development of an effective mentoring program in a Catholic School for under-graduate teachers.	I will compile results from this session into a report which summarizes results and makes key recommendations to The CEOWA and UNDA. If you would like a copy of the report, at the end of this session today, we will have a form for you to fill out.

	<p><b>PROVIDING A CONTEXT FOR THIS RESEARCH:</b>  Overview, Background,  Participants’ Selection, Their Roles. This study is investigating the mentoring of Beginning Teachers and as a result It Is hoped to Identify common themes to be used when devising a mentoring program to assist Beginning Teachers. These lessons can then be applied to assist the career aspirations of future Beginning Teachers.</p>	Participant selection - How were you chosen? Letters soliciting participants were sent to Catholic Primary Principals. Also e-mails were sent to specific participants from their participation in The Accreditaion to Work in a Catholic School work-shop.
	<p><b>Participants role today</b> - Our discussion today focuses on your own mentoring experiences after you’ve completed your Internship in a Catholic school.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Please speak from your own experience and knowledge.</li> <li>2) You are not expected to act like experts.</li> <li>3) Feel free to give your opinions. There are no wrong answers.</li> <li>4) At times we may go around the table asking for input.</li> <li>5) One person will speak at a time. If you are waiting for your turn to speak or want to note some thoughts, please use the paper and pen provided to take notes.</li> </ol> <p>I will be the interviewer/facilitator. I will be asking the questions.</p>	
	<p>I will be taking notes and keeping track of time. As back-up, the conversation will be tape recorded. No names will be used in the final report. Does anyone have any objections?</p>	Possible research assistant or MP4 / tape recorder
	<p><b>QUESTIONS</b></p>	<p><b>POSSIBLE FOLLOW UP QUESTIONS</b></p>
5-10 minutes	<p><b>QUESTION 1</b> Were you assigned a mentor when you first entered your present school?</p>	<p>When and What did the initial contact entail when you met with your mentor? Were you all in Catholic or State schools for your placements.</p>

5-10 minutes	<b>QUESTION 2</b> This question asks you to reflect on your first experiences of your school community : How did you go about finding resources in your school to assist you with your first days of teaching. Whom did you find most helpful in settling you into the workplace?	If a person has no mentor who is the person they approach for assistance?
5-10 minutes	<b>QUESTION 3</b> How did the mentor/s assist you or hinder you in your progress?	Why is this working so well/ not working? Do they assist you in all learning areas or just RE?
5-10 minutes	<b>QUESTION 4</b> In your career so far what aspects of the mentoring process have assisted you to begin a professional development plan for your future teaching career?	What do you aspire to become and how is your mentor assisting you in your professional development ?
5-10 minutes	<b>QUESTION 5</b> How has the Professional development you have undertaken in your first weeks at school assisted you in settling into your school?	How have PLC's/ Staff meetings assisted you in your teaching and helping students to learn more effectively? Can you provide me with some examples? Did UNDA have some good preparation courses.
5-10 minutes	<b>QUESTION 6</b> What are the key qualities that make up mentoring for you in your school?	How much time is given to this mentoring per week/term?
5-10 minutes	<b>QUESTION 7</b> How could the implementation of a mentoring program be better implemented in your school?	If it is working well what qualities make it that way? If there is no mentoring program what could be done? What are you suggestions for a good Mentoring program when you begin Teaching next year?

5 minutes	<b>CONCLUSION</b>  Following this session, I will summarize your comments into a report and make key recommendations to the CEOWA and UNDA. In the report you will not be quoted by name and your name will not appear in any printed materials. If you are interested in receiving a report, please leave your email address on the form supplied Thank you John Topliss	
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## Appendix N

### Beginning Teachers Focus Group Interview: August/ September 2013.

#### MENTORING

#### Script

<b>Time Allotment</b>	<b>Dialogue:</b>	<b>Organisation:</b>
2-5 minutes	<b>GREETINGS/WELCOME</b> Welcome and thank everyone for volunteering for this focus group. Tell participants where the toilets/ emergency exits are.	
5 minutes	<b>INTRODUCTION:</b> Welcome to this Mentoring Beginning Teachers' focus group. Thanks for agreeing to take part in this study. The research shows that mentoring can positively assist the overall teaching experience of under graduate and Beginning Teachers and can provide the mentor and mentee with valuable life and career skills. Your participation will assist in gathering data about what aspects of mentoring are currently carried out in your work-place.	Name badges  Methods of recording conversation
5 minutes	<b>INTRODUCTORY TASKS.</b> Give name tags at door Ask participants to introduce themselves with their name, school and grade(s) where they teach etc. and share something interesting about themselves with the person next to them.	WARM - Up starter
5 minutes	<b>PURPOSE</b> The purpose of this session is to discover what lessons learnt from the mentoring experience and how this learning applied to the development of an effective mentoring program in a Catholic School for Beginning Teachers.	I will compile summary results from this session into a report and makes key recommendations to The CEOWA and UNDA. If you would like a copy of the report, at the end of this session today, we will have a form for you to fill out.



	<p><b>PROVIDING A CONTEXT FOR THIS RESEARCH:</b>  Overview, Background, Participants' Selection, Their Roles. This study is investigating the mentoring of Beginning Teachers and as a result It Is hoped to Identify common themes to be used when devising a mentoring program to assist Beginning Teachers. These lessons can then be applied to assist the career aspirations of future Beginning Teachers.</p>	<p>Participant selection - How were you chosen? Letters soliciting participants were sent to Catholic Primary Principals. Also e-mails were sent to specific participants from their participation in The Accreditation to Work in a Catholic School work-shop.</p>
	<p><b>Participants role today</b> - Our discussion today focuses on your own mentoring experiences since you started in Catholic Education.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Please speak from your own experience and knowledge.</li> <li>2) You are not expected to act like experts.</li> <li>3) Feel free to give your opinions. There are no wrong answers.</li> <li>4) At times we may go around the table asking for input.</li> <li>5) One person will speak at a time. If you are waiting for your turn to speak or want to note some thoughts, please use the paper and pen provided to take notes.</li> </ol> <p>I will be the interviewer/facilitator. I will be asking the questions.</p>	
	<p>There may be a person taking notes and keeping track of time. As back-up, the conversation will be tape recorded. No names will be used in the final report. Does anyone have any objections?</p>	<p>Possible research assistant or MP4 / tape recorder</p>
	<p><b>QUESTIONS</b></p>	<p><b>POSSIBLE FOLLOW UP QUESTIONS</b></p>
5-10 minutes	<p><b>QUESTION 1</b>  How has mentoring assisted you with your teaching so far this year?</p>	<p>General benefits?</p>

5-10 minutes	<b>QUESTION 2</b> At what stage of the year did you require the most assistance from a mentor this year? Beginning, First Term, Second Term etc. and why was the mentor most required at this time? Was this more emotional support or more to do with class procedures etc.?	Which term did you require the most assistance?
5-10 minutes	<b>QUESTION 3</b> What characteristics did your mentor exhibit that you found to be beneficial? Once again was this more emotional support or more to do with procedures etc?	Why is this working so well- how do they assist?
5-10 minutes	<b>QUESTION 4</b> What information and feedback did you think you required more from a Mentor?	How has your mentor assisted you in your professional development ?
5-10 minutes	<b>QUESTION 5</b> What support do you still require from your mentor/school?	How have PLC's/ Staff meetings assisted you in your teaching and helping students to learn more effectively? Can you provide me with some examples?
5-10 minutes	<b>QUESTION 6</b> What issues might/do you face in developing a mentoring program in your school?	What are some of the benefits of a mentoring program?
5-10 minutes	<b>QUESTION 7</b> What support structures do you feel needs to be in place for beginning classroom teachers in your school? What do they need to know? <hr/> <b>QUESTION 8</b> In your experience, what are the key moments in the life of a beginning teacher?	What are some structures that worked well for you?
5 minutes	<b>CONCLUSION</b>  Following this session, I will summarize your comments into a report and make key recommendations to the CEOWA and UNDA. In the report, you will not be quoted by name and your name will not appear in any printed materials. If you are interested in receiving a report, please leave your email address on the form supplied Thank you John Topliss	

## Appendix O

### Beginning Teacher Self Reflection Questionnaire.

# My Teaching Self Reflection

John Topliss Ph D study 2013

My Code Name: \_\_\_\_\_

#### MENTORING STUDY

My relationship with my Mentor

Excellent    Good    Developing    N/A

**JANUARY**

**FEBRUARY**

How did I feel about my teaching in February?

My relationship with my Mentor

How did you feel about your teaching?

How was your relationship with your students?

**MARCH**

How did I feel about my teaching in March?

My relationship with my Mentor

How did you feel about your teaching?

How was your relationship with your students?

**APRIL**

How did I feel about my teaching in April?

My relationship with my Mentor

How did you feel about your teaching?

How was your relationship with your students?

TWO THINGS I have learnt about my own teaching since the beginning of the year:

\*

\*

One thing I would like to work on that has been either suggested by my Mentor, by a Staff member or after self-reflection:

\*

## Beginning Teacher Self Reflection Questionnaire (contd).

# My Teaching Self Reflection

John Topliss Ph D study 2013

		Excellent	Good	Developing	N/A	
<b>MAY</b>						
My relationship with my Mentor	How did I feel about my teaching in May?!	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>TWO THINGS I have learnt about my own teaching since the beginning of the year:</b> *
How did you feel about your teaching?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
How was your relationship with your students?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>JUNE</b>						
My relationship with my Mentor	How did I feel about my teaching in June?!	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	*
How did you feel about your teaching?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
How was your relationship with your students?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>JULY</b>						
My relationship with my Mentor	How did I feel about my teaching in July?!	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<u>One thing I would like to work on that has been either suggested by my Mentor, by a Staff member or after self-reflection:</u> *
How did you feel about your teaching?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
How was your relationship with your students?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>AUGUST</b>						
My relationship with my Mentor	How did I feel about my teaching in August?!	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
How did you feel about your teaching?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
How was your relationship with your students?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	