Celebrating the successes of Cohort 1

Exciting times, as the initial cohorts from each of the five Teacher Education Centres of Excellence celebrated their graduation from the respective Centre programs in the last fortnight.

Seventy-one preservice teachers completed their enhanced clinical programs through the Centres and participated in the Department of Education, Training and Employment’s Graduate Interview process. Through this process, panels of experienced administrators and teachers assessed each applicant’s suitability to work in the state schooling sector.

The top ranking level (Outstanding) is generally achieved by only 25% of all graduates who apply to work for Education Queensland. Of the Centre of Excellence Cohort 1, 42% achieved this ranking. This impressive outcome is a credit to the participants, their mentors and the Centre of Excellence programs.

Achievement across the top two bandings (Outstanding and High Performing) for Centre of Excellence participants was 77% in comparison to the average of 59%.

Centre of Excellence graduates have now been placed across six Queensland educational regions for 2013, ensuring high quality beginning teachers will be teaching in our schools across the breadth of Queensland.

Thanks must go to the Regional Staffing Managers who have worked together to ensure the placement of the Teacher Education Centre of Excellence participants was prioritised in each region.

There is a spread of achievement levels from the Centres of Excellence across the 6 education regions employing TECE graduates in 2013. The majority of TECE graduates have received an offer of permanency which is to be celebrated as an achievement of the Centres.
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Centres of Excellence Update

The next step in the journey……..

Our Teacher Education Centres of Excellence graduates come from seven different Queensland universities and have been placed in schools across the state from Rollingstone SS in the north to Goondiwindi SHS in the south, west to Spinitex State College (Mt Isa) and east to Varsity State College.

Preservice mentees from each of the five Teacher Education Centres of Excellence are excitedly preparing for their first teaching appointment in a Queensland State School.

In 2013 Centre of Excellence graduates will be teaching in a variety of contexts and a variety of subjects from Prep to Year 12.

Natalie Reason from the Morayfield Cluster Teacher Education Centre of Excellence has been appointed to Hughenden State School in North Queensland Region. Natalie, her husband and 4 children will be relocating to Hughenden prior to Christmas so they can explore the local area and get to meet the local people before school starts.

The principal of Hughenden SS flew Natalie up for a 3 day visit to help her get to know the staff and community better.

Here is Natalie’s email sent during that visit: "Well, I survived my fear of flying and arrived here (in Hughenden) safely! While I have only spent one day here so far, I am really pleased with my decision. The school is exactly what I had wanted for my first year of teaching. The admin is extremely supportive and helpful, and the staff are just fabulous. I am spending today with the prep/1 class, and will learn more about the strategies etc used. Tonight is their Xmas concert, and the community spirit is just great! I fly back Wednesday night, and will be straight back to packing. Now that I have seen my house, I have a much better idea about what to bring and what to leave behind. I am just so excite!

Natalie wanted to convey her thanks to Kerri Holzwart, the Head of Mentoring at Morayfield Teacher Education Centre of Excellence for everything that she has done for Natalie over the last 12 months. Natalie believes that without Kerri she wouldn’t be commencing her career in Hughenden.

Graduating preservice teachers at each of the Centres of Excellence have attributed the success of the programs to a variety factors the most common being:

- Quality of the mentoring relationship. Many mentees felt able to take risks and try new strategies in this supported environment where assessment was not part of the relationship. For many mentees they anticipate that they will continue to maintain a relationship with their TECE mentor.
- Quality and skill level of the mentors

"The commitment to professional growth is evident in my mentors approach to her work. It is inspiring to see an experienced teacher consistently seek different ways to help her students learn”.

- Head of Mentoring
  The work of the Heads of Mentoring in maintaining the integrity of the Centre’s program and their commitment to the mentees was identified as a major factor in mentee success.
- Access to additional class time
  Centre participants recognise the value in participating in classes on a regular basis. They often mention their new understanding of the student’s growth in learning as a significant experience.

2013

Applications for mentees in 4 of the 5 Centres have closed. Benowa TECE will finalise their Cohort 2 intake once places in Griffith Universities Graduate Diploma program close.

Current 2013 mentee numbers are:
Kelvin Grove 25
Morayfield Cluster 23
Mt Stuart Cluster 24
Special Education 21

Mentor training and up skilling in mentoring practices continues at all Centres of Excellence in preparation for Cohort 2.
Mark Campling, A/Regional Director South East Region congratulated the preservice teachers and their mentors for their commitment to preparing the mentees through a clinical approach in readiness for the 2013 school year.

The pedagogical focus of the Centre continued during second semester. A highlight of the professional development for teacher mentors and preservice teachers was the visit to the Centre by Prof Peter Sullivan from Monash University, cowriter of the ACARA National Mathematics Curriculum.

This visit was initiated by Griffith University Liaison to the Centre Prof Robyn Jorgensen, and involved all teacher mentors in a half day program with workshops in Maths and Science pedagogy. Peter and Robyn were joined by Griffith academics in Maths and Science Education - Kevin Larkin, David Geelan and Harry Kanasa.

Prof Peter Sullivan (Monash University) working with BTECE students

The program was structured for preservice teachers to be able to participate in each workshop and on the second day they worked exclusively with Peter on ‘Innovative Maths Pedagogy’.

On the afternoon of the second day Peter delivered a seminar to regional Maths HODs and primary HOCs which were very warmly received.

Formal and anecdotal feedback indicates that the program was highly valued by all those who took part.

Recruitment for 2013 has commenced and interviews are underway. Anecdotal evidence from University sources suggests that interest in post graduate study may be down compared to previous years.

Benowa graduates have been outstandingly successful in securing permanent employment with 11 of the 13 participants (at the time of writing) offered permanent appointments for 2013 following successful suitability assessments via the usual ranking procedures - an 85% success rate. Of the 14 students who commenced the BTECE program in February, 13 completed, and this represents an exceptional completion rate compared to the wider cohort of preservice Graduate Diploma teachers.

Local elder Aunty Patricia Leavy, who has a strong belief in the provision of a quality education for all students, delivered the ‘Welcome to Country’ at the Centres graduation ceremony.

Aunty Patricia Leavy with Janet Bannah (DETE)
The last few months have been a very busy time for all associated with the MTECE. Recruitment for 2013 has been finalised, teacher mentors trained and inducted, a beginning teacher induction package finalised and the 2012 preservice teacher group graduated from the program.

As a result of the state wide model adopted by our centre, for 2013 we have participants from far and wide. In all, there are 23 preservice teachers ready to commence in the centre at the beginning of 2013.

We are also pleased to welcome new teacher mentors for the New Year. In November, teacher mentors gathered for Mentoring for Effective Teaching training and an induction into the centre. These were highly motivating and successful collegial days where teachers from 11 schools across the state were able to learn more about the skills of effective mentoring, share their knowledge and ideas with each other as well as discuss the importance and significance of their roles as teacher mentors with the MTECE. We look forward to working with this group of highly skilled and professional teachers during 2013.

As well as maintaining our current university partnerships we are pleased to commence work with the University of the Sunshine Coast who will have preservice teachers involved with the centre next year. This expansion is exciting for our centre as this university is one of our near neighbours.

As part of the support offered through the MTECE, an induction program will be distributed to schools employing MTECE graduates for 2013. The beginning teacher induction package is designed to support the transition of graduates to their role as full time teachers. It is a guide and resource package to be used by schools in conjunction with their existing induction programs and DETE induction resources. It reinforces the commitment of the centre to providing high quality support for preservice and beginning teachers.

Finally, the 2012 inaugural group of now beginning teachers are ready to commence their teaching careers. Their graduation from the MTECE was celebrated on Saturday 8 December with more than 75 people attending. It was a very special function and an opportunity to thank all of the supporters of the Centre as well as celebrating the achievements of our participants.

The outcomes for this cohort have been outstanding and we are very proud of their achievements. Most of the group are already aware of their schools for 2013 with many of these placements being permanent teaching positions. We are proud that over half of the group are taking up positions outside of the south east corner.

We wish the 2012 graduates all the very best for a successful and satisfying teaching career. We look forward to hearing their stories and triumphs in the future.
Kelvin Grove I Special Education Early, Middle and Senior

2012 has been a very busy and rewarding year as we all continue to learn from our experiences.

This year at Kelvin Grove Teacher Education Centre of Excellence, there’s been an increase in the numbers of Teacher Mentors and Preservice Teachers participating in the program. This has provided us with an opportunity to further examine the importance of the relationship between the mentors and their pre-service teachers, something that can and is being reciprocated in other situations such as a mentoring relationship between two experienced teachers or between an experienced teacher and a new or beginning teacher.

There have been some key aspects of the relationship that translate across the different partnerships. The most important however seems to be explicit expectations.

- What does the mentor want from the relationship?
- What does the mentee want from the relationship?
- What is the common purpose that both parties are working towards?

Without clearly outlining the areas to be focussed on, both parties are working in a vacuum.

Mentees are responsible for identifying particular skills they wish to develop and asking their mentor for guidance, clearly outlining their needs so that their mentor can support them.

The mentor also provides the mentee with information and skills they may not be aware that they need such as information about the school’s pedagogical framework.

At KGTECE we utilise DETE’s Developing Performance Framework to provide the mentees with a starting point from where they can identify areas for improvement and focus to enhance their pedagogy. It also gives the mentors a tool, one they use in their own professional work, to use in conversations with their mentees.

When expectations are clear in the relationship, there is an explicit understanding of the journey that is being undertaken.

Expectations are everybody’s business.
Aspley TECE I Special Education

In the past three months the Teacher Education Centre of Excellence (Special Education) (TECESE) has been proud to offer a range of professional learning opportunities to special education teachers and preservice teachers.

A three day Internship Intensive was conducted for all fourth year students completing the Bachelor of Education (Special Education) at Griffith University. This work readiness program included training in Code of Conduct, Student Protection and other Departmental initiatives. Leading educators also shared their expertise on a range of special education topics including the educational implications of Vision Impairment and Hearing Impairment, the Education Adjustment Program, curriculum risk assessments and variations to school routines, planning for post-school transition, C2C planning materials to support special educators, timetabling and working with other professionals, sexuality and disability and finally, what to expect in your first week, month and year of teaching. The generosity and wisdom of the presenters cannot be underestimated and this was a fruitful three days for all involved.

In addition to this program for fourth years, the TECESE was honoured to partner with Family Planning Queensland (FPQ) to offer four workshops free of charge to special education teachers and preservice teachers. Participants left more able to approach sexuality and relationships education concepts in their settings, and the Centre is grateful to FPQ for this opportunity.

The Centre has also trained 18 additional mentors, bringing total mentor numbers to 48 in 32 Partner Schools across Metropolitan Region. The tailored program delivered by special education expert and coach Nick Burnett was well received. It was followed up with an induction workshop so that all mentors are ready to begin on the Student Free Days.

Fourteen new mentees from Griffith University and the University of Southern Queensland have joined the TECESE ranks and most of them have already been able to meet their mentor. They have also completed induction, so all are poised for excellence in 2013!

The Centre wrapped up the year with an evening for the departing fourth years. All are heading into permanent employment, with four making their way to regions beyond Brisbane. The remaining mentees will all begin their careers in TECSE Partner Schools – a wonderful outcome for 2012 with heartfelt thanks to all involved.
Mt Stuart Cluster TECE I Indigenous Student and Community Participation

On Tuesday 27 November, Mt Stuart Cluster Teacher education Centre of Excellence celebrated their inaugural 2012 Graduation at Wulguru SS. There were nine, 4th year James Cook University students successfully graduating. Over 70 invited guests attended the night with congratulatory speeches from the North Queensland Regional Director, Richard English, MSCTECE Lead principal, Anne-Marie Day and JCU Dean & Head of the School of Education, Professor Lindsay Parry.

Kelly Green, one of the students, spoke on behalf of her fellow graduating students thanking the Department of Education, Training and Employment for the opportunity to be part of this dynamic and rewarding initiative. She also thanked the trained teacher mentors acknowledging their diversity of skills and knowledge and their dedication to their profession which was evidenced by the level of support provided to all MSCTECE students. She acknowledged the challenges awaiting all the students on commencing their teaching journey and was personally eagerly looking forward to working in Mt Isa.

Everyone wished the students success in their new career path!

In 2013 the MSCTECE is expanding the program to include Cairns JCU students with an additional seven Alliance schools in the Cairns Region. The program has also been extended to include an aligned subject to the existing JCU 4th year education program. This partnership will allow the students to engage in additional Education Queensland focused targeted workshops, providing them with the opportunity to be better prepared for teaching in our state school system. These workshops will be facilitated by FNQ & NQ Education Services teams, providing a further opportunity to foster and develop productive partnerships across the 2 regions. Training was provided for the Cairns and Townsville mentor teachers and the pre-service teachers last week. All appeared keen and eager for 2013 program!

Previous HoM Jordana Murphy, Kelly Green, Catherine Cantoni, Renee Campbell, Jacinta Brix, Nikea Betteridge, Stacey Melvin & Amanda Poloni, HoM Patsy Tanner (absent: Allarna Langford & Belinda Graniglia)