

MAKING THE MOST OF MENTOR CONVERSATIONS

By: Susan Vissenjoux

Assistant Principal Susan Vissenjoux from Noble Park Primary School explores practical tips for graduates and their mentors

Three conversations to have with your mentor

One of your goals for this year is probably moving from provisional to full teacher registration. Your provisional registration will be valid for two years but with employment uncertainty for graduate teachers being a reality, most teachers choose to complete the registration process in the first year if they have employment.

1. The process of achieving full registration provides an opportunity for you to delve deeper to create a detailed cohort profile and to investigate an aspect of your teaching practice that can be further developed in relation to your context. The requirements of moving from provisional to (full) registration can be found [here](#). You should read this information carefully so you are clear about the expectations and requirements. In a nutshell, you need to teach for 80 days (just under 2 terms of fulltime teaching) and use evidence to demonstrate your proficiency as a teacher against the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers.

Discussion questions with your mentor:

- What are the specific requirements for moving from provisional to (full) registration?
 - Is it possible for me to achieve full registration this year?
2. With guidance from your mentor teacher, you may have already identified potential areas of practice to focus on in your inquiry. Keep in mind that the project should be based around an area that is a genuine need for you and your students. At my school, we often incorporate an

aspect of ‘supporting EAL learners’ in our VIT registration projects because it is an area of knowledge and practice that needs development in graduate teachers for our setting. We also consider differentiation, explicit teaching, learning with technology and basic classroom management – some of the building blocks of teaching – when we are formulating the inquiry question. This is a way to ensure that important aspects of basic teaching are investigated as part of the project, rather than as additional learning. You will know which area you need to develop – an area that you lack expertise in but will really benefit your group of learners.

Discussion questions with your mentor:

- In my classes, what are my current areas of concern?
 - What elements of teaching and learning would I like to develop further?
 - Based on the needs of my learners, what might I need to know and do differently in my teaching practice to progress their learning?
3. Make the inquiry focused and manageable. Discuss the timeline with your mentor teacher now so that you are absolutely clear about your parameters.

Discussion questions with your mentor:

- Is there flexibility in the timetable to allow for observations to occur?
- Does the school have a protocol to follow when you go to observe colleagues?
- When and where will the presentation to the panel take place?
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The registration process is a fantastic opportunity for you to get to know your students better as you explore professional learning and learn from your colleagues to improve your practice. Get started now so that you can make the most of the experience.