

FINAL REPORT

Evaluation of the VIT Standards and Professional Learning Project 2003

submitted to

**Standards and Professional Learning Branch,
Victorian Institute of Teaching**

by

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Evaluation of the Victorian Institute of Teaching

Standards and Professional Learning Project 2003

BACKGROUND

In 2002, the First Council of the Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) developed policies and processes for registering teachers in Victoria. During the establishment phase, teachers already practising in government and non-government schools were 'deemed' to be registered under the Victorian Institute of Teaching Act (November 2001). New graduate teachers not eligible for deemed registration would need to apply for registration.

In July 2002, the Council agreed that the process of developing the standards for registration should involve and engage the profession and that the standards should be a vehicle for professional learning.

In October 2002, the VIT commissioned from ACER a scoping paper *A Review of Standards of Practice for Beginning Teaching*. The paper described and compared the following standards frameworks for teachers:

- Interim Teacher Class Standards (Victorian Department of Education and Training and the Australian Education Union 2000)
- Professional Standards for Teachers (Education Queensland)
- The National Competencies for Beginning Teachers (National Project on the Quality of Teaching and Learning)
- Standards of Practice for the Teaching Profession (Ontario College of Teachers)
- Standards developed by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) in the United States
- Standards developed by the Interstate New Teacher and Support Consortium (INTASC) in the United States
- Quality Teacher and Induction Standards for Teachers (Teacher Training Agency, United Kingdom)
- Praxis 111/Pathwise (Educational Testing Service, USA)

The paper provided an analysis of the similarities and differences of these standards in terms of:

- structure and coherence;
- the ways in which they conceptualised dimensions or stages of teacher growth and development, or levels of expertise/proficiency in performance;
- the methods used to determine whether teachers met the standards;
- the ways in which the standards made links with professional learning.

It noted that the twin purposes of a professional standards framework are to provide a basis for:

- Assurance of quality teaching; and
- Opportunities for professional learning

It also noted that these two purposes are interdependent and complementary.

The paper suggested that the new VIT standards for beginning teachers should serve as professional learning framework that would support provisionally registered teachers through a one year induction period leading up to an assessment to decide their eligibility for full registration. During the induction period, teachers would receive continuing feedback/formative assessment, based on the standards, from a trained mentor colleague. This would be a powerful learning experience for both teachers and mentors.

It recommended that:

- Training in teacher evaluation and the application of the VIT standards should be provided for mentors and school principals.
- There should be a summative evaluation at the end of the assessment period, the purpose of which would be to decide whether applicants had demonstrated that they met the VIT standards for full teacher registration.
- Responsibility for the fairness, validity and reliability of the summative assessment should reside with the VIT.
- Only individuals who had completed the Institute's training in teacher evaluation should be eligible to be members of the panel carrying out the assessments.
- The assessments should be clearly distinguished from other school-based assessments, such as those for performance management.

THE STANDARDS AND PROFESSIONAL LEARNING PILOT PROJECT 2003

Design and implementation

In February 2003, the Victorian State Minister for Education and Training launched the 'Standards and Professional Learning Project' as the first major policy initiative of the new Institute. The brief of the project was:

- to develop professional teaching standards for full registration, and
- to support new teachers (who were mostly newly graduated teachers from tertiary teacher education programs) to move from provisional to full registration at the end of their first year of teaching.

This involved designing and implementing evidence based assessment processes to show that the standards had been met. These assessments would provide guarantees of teacher quality to the public and to the teaching profession in Victoria.

The project involved:

- Approximately 200 graduate teachers, their mentors and principals;
- 115 schools (11 independent, 20 Catholic and 84 government) from all regions in the state of Victoria;
- a research based evaluation team (ACER);
- a stakeholder reference group;
- the VIT Standards and Professional Learning sub-committee.

The role of the ACER evaluation team

Members of the ACER evaluation team were:

Lawrence Ingvarson (Research Director, ACER Teaching and Learning Program)

Elizabeth Kleinhenz (ACER Research Fellow)

Marion Meiers (ACER Senior Research Fellow)

Charlotte Danielson, President, Princeton Educational Consultants New Jersey, USA

The role of the ACER team was to assist the VIT Standards and Professional Learning Branch (SPLB) in:

- Revising and using the interim Standards for Professional Practice;
- Developing a final set of standards, based on wide consultation on the interim standards;
- Developing appropriate assessment tasks to gather evidence about graduate teacher knowledge and skill in relation to the standards;
- Developing procedures to support professional learning and assess teachers' performance against the interim standards;
- Ensuring that the tasks and assessments provided an effective vehicle for professional learning and reflection;
- Developing procedures to gather feedback from mentors, principals and graduate teachers involved in the project;
- Designing and delivering a training program for mentors and principals as assessors;
- Designing and implementing procedures for 'moderating' graduate portfolios against the standards.

In addition to the above, the ACER evaluation team agreed to:

- Provide regular progress reports to the Standards and Professional Learning Committee;
- Gather evidence, through case study interviews and a final survey of participants, about the effectiveness of the project in schools;
- Provide a final report to the Standards and Professional Learning Committee.

Developing the standards

The work of developing the standards began at the first planning day on Monday December 2002, when teachers, principals and other educators who had expressed interest in being part of the project met to workshop a set of interim standards that were drafted by the Standards and Professional Learning Branch. This was the first time the profession had engaged with the standards. It proved to be the beginning of a highly consultative process, planned and implemented by the SPLB that was to continue through a comprehensive program of workshops and activities throughout 2003.

The ACER evaluators provided ongoing feedback on the various changes and drafts of interim standards that followed the consultations during the course of the year.

The final version of the Standards of Professional Practice for Full Registration was 'signed off' by the Victorian Minister for Education in December 2003. The standards now comprise a 'Statement of Principle' and eight standards grouped under three 'themes': 'professional

knowledge’, ‘professional practice’ and ‘professional engagement’. Each of the eight standards is further articulated in four ‘characteristics’.

Developing tasks to gather evidence about graduate teachers’ performance

During the first half of 2003 the SPLB project team began to develop professional learning and assessment portfolio tasks that would:

- Be a vehicle for graduates’ professional learning
- Provide evidence that graduates met the standards

How to best develop these tasks was the focus of a number of meetings between the ACER project evaluators and the SPLB team. Charlotte Danielson contributed to these meetings via teleconferencing and email. Her contention that the tasks should be ‘a natural harvest of teachers’ work’ rather than an intrusive ‘add on’ proved to be a beacon that led the team through some complex and sensitive territory.

In response to requests from the SPLB, the ACER evaluators developed sample tasks and provided the SPLB with various examples of tasks and options from Australia and overseas. ACER also provided some examples of completed portfolio entries based on the Australian Science Teachers’ Association (ASTA) standards. The SPLB constructed the first two portfolio tasks on the basis of this work.

The three portfolio tasks

The first task, the ‘Student Work Based Portfolio Task (SWBPT), required graduates, with feedback from mentors, to analyse and document the progress of two students over three to five weeks, or ten to fifteen hours of lessons in the context of the progress of the whole class.

The task had five components:

1. Establishing the teaching context
2. Planning a teaching and learning sequence
3. Providing details of two teaching and learning activities
4. An analysis of two students’ learning
5. A reflection of the teaching and learning process

The second task was the ‘classroom observations’ task. For this task, the plan was that the graduate and mentor would engage in three classroom observations during the year. For each, there would be a pre observation discussion to discuss

- The focus for the observation
- The planned learning activities and outcomes
- Contextual information

The mentor would observe the class and take notes, relating the graduate teacher’s performance to the relevant standards. After the observation, the mentor and graduate would have another conversation, in which the mentor would provide the graduate with feedback. This feedback, together with the graduate’s own reflections, was to be recorded on pro-formas developed by ACER and the SPLB team. Mentors and graduates were given the option of using ‘rubrics’, also developed by the SPLB and ACER, which enabled the standards to be

used to measure two levels of performance: ‘Consolidating classroom practice’ and ‘Classroom practice requires further guidance and development.’

The VIT’s requirement that a record of the observations should be included in the portfolio served the important purpose of ensuring that mentors and graduates met three times and discussed a specific teaching activity, using the VIT standards.

In developing this task, the SPLB and ACER evaluators faced the difficulty that most people involved in the project, especially the graduates and mentors themselves, did not want mentors to have a formal assessment role. They felt that the trusting relationships that had been established between most graduates and mentors could be jeopardised if the mentors were required to undertake a summative, high stakes assessment of the graduates’ teaching performance. This role-conflict issue was only partially resolved by the end of the project.

The third task was for the graduate to provide evidence of satisfying ‘professional engagement’ Standards. For this task, the graduates were asked to complete a list of activities they had undertaken, outside their normal teaching duties, that showed engagement with the profession. A sample list of activities was provided by the SPLB.

Meetings and workshops for graduates, mentors and principals

Throughout 2003 graduates, mentors and principals from all metropolitan and country schools involved in the SPLB project met regularly in regional groups to provide feedback on the draft standards and discuss their mutual experiences of the project, especially the mentoring experiences. Workshops held across the state in July and August provided a comprehensive program of advice and support with regard to completion of the three assessment tasks.

The specific purposes of the July/August workshops were:

- To review and reflect on experiences of the project so far;
- To ensure that graduates and mentors had a clear understanding of their roles and of the tasks;
- To train principals and mentors to assess the portfolio entries;
- To equip participants with skill and confidence in:
 - completing the portfolio tasks (graduates)
 - supporting graduates to complete the portfolio tasks (mentors).

ACER evaluators contributed to the preparation and development of training materials for the workshops. Lawrence Ingvarson and Charlotte Danielson provided the assessment training workshops for principals, mentors and graduates.

Portfolio peer review ‘moderation’ meetings

In October 2003, all project participants were asked to attend one of seventeen peer review or ‘moderation’ meetings that took place in metropolitan and country Victoria. The purpose of these sessions was for graduates and mentors from different schools to meet in collegiate groups to read, discuss and assess graduates’ portfolio entries for the Student Work Based Portfolio Task. (SWBPT). Participants made and recorded comments about the extent to which each entry met the relevant standards, on pro-formas designed by the SPLB team.

Two ACER evaluators attended four of these sessions. They joined in the activities and discussions, and participated in the collegiate assessments of the portfolio entries. They observed that some participants found the SWBPT to be quite difficult, but the entries were generally of a very high standard. Some graduates and mentors said that they still had doubts about their own understanding of the standards and their relation to teaching and learning. But all were supportive of the idea of using standards for this purpose. All agreed that completing the portfolio task had caused them to focus on the standards and increased their understanding of the standards and their relevance to practice.

The assessments made at these sessions were formative only. Graduates retained the proformas with recorded comments about their portfolio entries. Some planned to use the comments as a basis for improving their work in preparation for the summative panel assessment to be held at the end of the year.

These sessions provided very useful professional development for both mentors and graduates. The activities involved teachers in sharing professional expertise at the fundamental levels of practice – planning, analysing students’ learning, and reflection in relation to professional standards. Participants said that opportunities of this kind were few and that they valued this chance to discuss their experiences with colleagues from other schools. These sessions helped to open up the idea of profession-wide (rather than individual or single school) standards and guidelines for what counts as ‘good’ and ‘excellent’ practice.

ASSESSMENT METHODS FOR REGISTRATION

Formative assessment

In the course of the project in schools, mentors and, in some cases principals and other teachers made formative assessments of graduates’ progress, in relation to the Student Work Based Portfolio Task (SWBPT) and the classroom observations task. The chief purpose of these assessments was to support the graduates’ learning.

The assessments took place in a variety of ways, with some schools placing more emphasis on formal processes than others. The assessments played a vital role in supporting standards based professional learning. As mentioned, the VIT processes ensured that mentors and graduates actually met and engaged in these supportive professional learning activities.

The most formal, and only ‘cross school’ example of formative peer assessment was observed at the peer review/moderation meetings discussed above.

Assessing graduates’ eligibility for full teacher registration

In addition to building a standards based professional learning program for graduate teachers, the VIT was also responsible for setting up an assessment process that would result in a defensible judgement as to whether a graduate teacher had acquired professional knowledge and skills of sufficient quality to warrant their progression from ‘provisional’ registration to ‘full’ registration as a teacher in Victoria. Or, put another way, the task of the VIT was to set up ‘gatekeeping’ mechanisms that would determine a graduate’s fitness to become a full member of the teaching profession in this state. For this to happen, a final, summative

judgement would have to be made, on the basis of a portfolio of evidence (relating to the three tasks) presented by the graduate.

The VIT decided on a school based ‘panel process’ as the most suitable means of making this summative judgement. Panels of teachers, chaired by the school principal, are familiar to teachers in Victorian schools. They are used to appoint new teachers to schools and to allocate positions of responsibility within schools. In each of these panel processes, the principal is the final arbiter and decision maker (subject, in government schools, to final approval at the system level).

The VIT recommended that the panel composition, ‘where possible’ should be:

- The provisionally registered teacher
- The Principal
- A teacher nominated by the provisionally registered teacher
- A mentor involved in the project, but not the applicant’s mentor

Information disseminated to principals by the VIT (‘Trialling the Panel Process’, October 2003) under the heading ‘The Purpose of the Panel Discussion’ describes the panel process as a ‘discussion,’ whose purpose is to provide:

- An opportunity for the provisionally registered teacher to present and discuss their portfolio, summarising their evidence for the panel and providing an opportunity to show the development of their professional practice
- An opportunity for a collegiate discussion of professional practice generally and of the provisionally registered teacher’s demonstration of their professional growth against the standards

The VIT guidelines suggested a ‘possible process’ for the panels: the panel members would meet before the discussion with the graduate to familiarise themselves with the portfolio evidence. During the discussion, the graduate would make a short presentation, explaining how they had gathered evidence to meet the standards and reflecting on their work throughout the year. Panel members would be encouraged to ask questions of the graduate and ‘seek a dialogue about teaching and learning’.

At the conclusion of the discussion, the graduate might be asked to leave the room while the panel came to a decision about whether a recommendation for the graduate to become fully registered would be made.

Finally, the principal would complete a form providing a ‘brief outline of evidence presented’ in each area of the VIT Standards. He or she would then recommend either that the provisionally teacher become fully registered or that the period of registration be extended.

This form (to be completed by the principal for all graduates, not only the project participants) was the only documentation that had to be forwarded to the VIT.

EVALUATION FINDINGS

In December 2003, ACER developed and distributed three survey instruments for graduates, mentors and principals involved in the project. These surveys were developed in collaboration with the SPLB project team (See Appendix A: Survey Instruments.)

One hundred and one were sent to principals; of these 64 were completed and returned. (64 per cent)

Two hundred and eleven were sent to mentors; of these 147 were completed and returned. (per cent.)

One hundred and ninety eight were sent to graduates; of these one hundred and twenty four were completed and returned. (per cent

The surveys sought to gather the perceptions of participants in relation to three aspects of the standards and professional learning project

1. Professional learning

2. Professional collaboration

3. The panel processes for assessment of portfolio entries against the VIT professional teaching standards

To complement information gained from the surveys, case study interviews with graduates, mentors and principals were carried out in six schools: (See Appendix B: Interview Protocols)

- Two metropolitan state primary schools
- One metropolitan secondary school
- One metropolitan Catholic secondary school
- One metropolitan independent secondary school
- One country Catholic primary school

1. Professional learning

The interviews and surveys yielded convincing evidence that the project had led to significant professional learning for both graduates and mentors.

Learning from the Student Work Based Portfolio Task (SWBPT)

The great majority of project participants saw completing the SWBPT as valuable professional learning. Eighty-seven per cent of graduates, 93 per cent of mentors and 98 per cent of principals believed that completing this task had deepened the graduate's understanding of the VIT standards and 68 per cent of graduates, 81 per cent of mentors and 89 per cent of principals believed that completing this task would have a beneficial impact on the teaching of the graduate in the future (Figure 1)

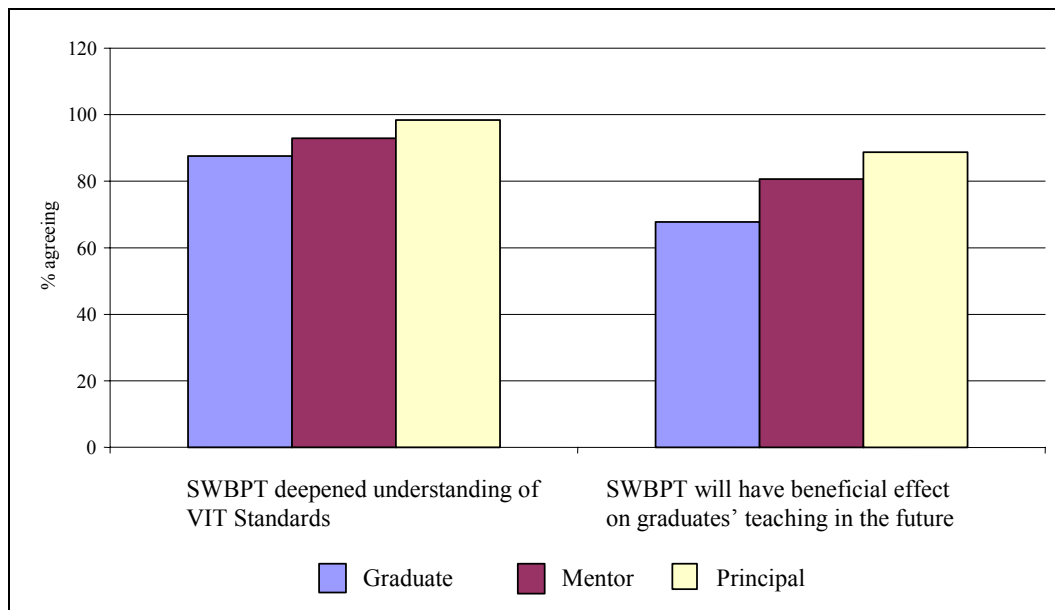


Figure 1

This view was strongly reflected in the comments made by teachers during the school interviews. Only one of the teachers interviewed was unsure about the learning she had experienced as a result of completing this task, and her comments were about the heavy amount of work involved:

It was so much work, much too much work! Too much like a Uni assignment. You can learn better from other things. I could have better used that time preparing for my classes.

Much more typical were comments like:

This was a wonderful learning tool for me. It helped me to understand the CSF learning outcomes and the different learning styles of the students. It was all about positive attitudes. My mentor worked with me every day and I had lots of informal chats with the principal as well as the more formal ones. (Graduate)

I consolidated what I learnt at Uni into a practical experience. It has definitely made me a better teacher. (Graduate)

(Completing the SWBPT) definitely made them better teachers. They've been pushed further, but this is a benefit. (Mentor)

Learning from the classroom observations task

All of the teachers, mentors and principals interviewed said that they had found the classroom observations valuable for their learning. This was borne out in the survey results: 72% of graduates, 86% of mentors and 97% principals said that the graduates had made beneficial changes to their teaching as a result of feedback during classroom observations. (Figure 2)

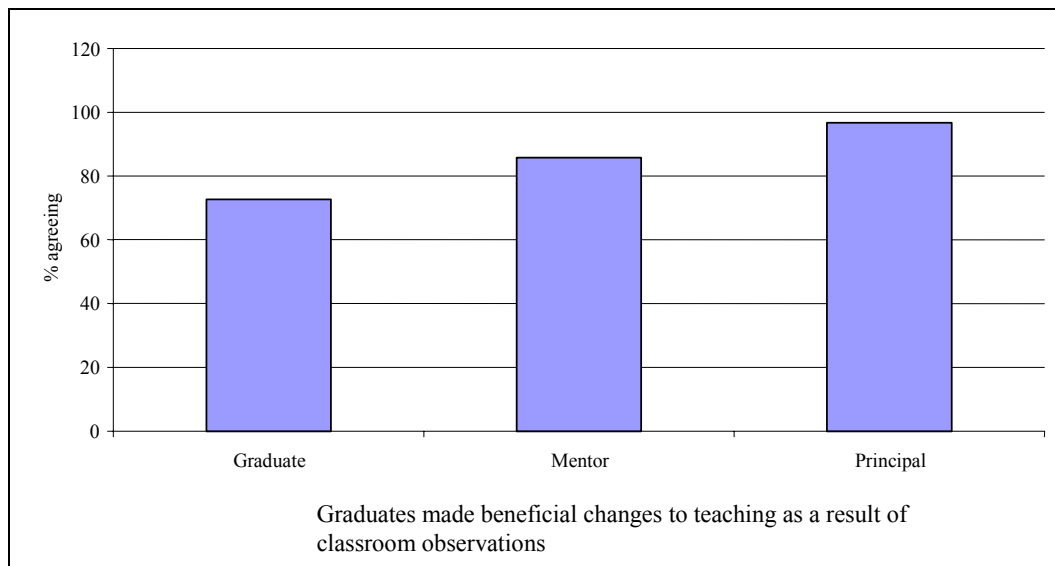


Figure 2

The evidence indicates that in terms of professional learning based on the VIT standards, the SWBPT was the more effective task. 61 per cent of graduates said that the classroom observations deepened their understanding of the standards compared with 88 per cent who said that completing the SWBPT had deepened this understanding. (Figure 3)

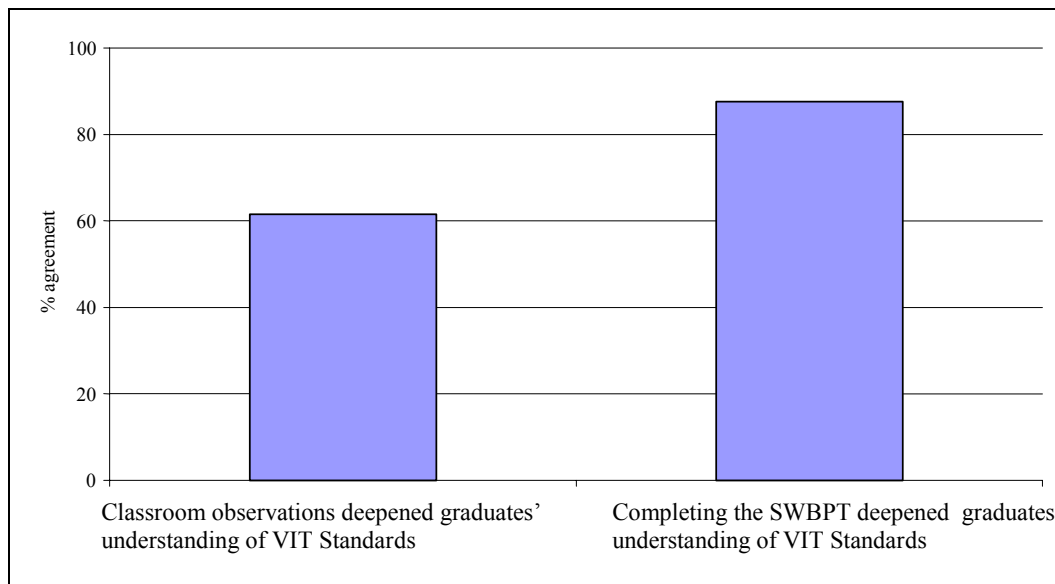


Figure 3

Only 50 per cent of graduates surveyed said that, in the classroom observation task, the mentors used the standards to give feedback. In the interviews, most of the mentors said that, in giving feedback to the graduates, they had drawn more on their own experiences of what 'worked' rather than the standards. Most of this feedback related to classroom management:

We talked about everything – everything. Classroom management was the big one. I was working with her to develop an approach to help her feel comfortable. Giving her ideas for strategies. (Mentor)

I go all the time to my mentor for help with the day to day tasks. I observe my mentor too. He gives me feedback: *'Have the kids line up. Don't talk till they're all quiet'*. (Graduate)

As participants became more familiar with the standards, they found them increasingly useful:

Early on we didn't talk much about the standards, but the more we went in to the program the more we needed to look at them. The standards are important as a guide to what they should achieve. The mentors alone can't do that. (Mentor)

(The point made in this comment has considerable significance for teachers' professional learning. It flags a progression from a stage where experienced teachers could only offer a 'tips' or a kind of practical advice that was not necessarily supported by research and usually focussed on classroom management issues (e.g. *'Have the kids line up. Don't talk till they're all quiet'*) to a standards based approach where teachers are able to draw on more complex and shared knowledge that has a sound basis in research.

Teachers in the case study schools carried out the classroom observations in a variety of ways. In two schools they followed, more or less to the letter, the path suggested by the VIT as recommended and discussed in the July workshops. Teachers in these schools said that they found the processes valuable:

The classroom observations were the most valuable from a professional learning point of view. We used the VIT pro-formas for all the graduates in this school (not just those in the project). There was no problem about mentors taking notes during the lessons. They did not feel intimidated. But we were doing this kind of thing before the project. The project has helped us to have a clearer focus. (Mentor)

I wouldn't have done anything if I hadn't known I would be formally observed by my mentor. But I knew it was coming so I approached some teachers who were recommended to me and asked if I could watch their classes. The culture here is for anyone to observe classes. I felt very well supported. I had two observations in Term 3. My mentor and I had a pre observation discussion and I found that very useful. She took a lot of notes during the observation and we had a post observation discussion. I learnt heaps. (Graduate who was observed by the mentor above.)

In some of the other schools, more flexible arrangements were made for the observations, where the mentors and graduates 'helped out' in each others' classrooms, giving each other feedback as they went along:

We were very comfortable about going in and out of each others' classrooms. The mentors used the forms to 'crit' the graduates and then the graduates used it to 'crit' the experienced teachers. The experienced teacher would say: This is what I observed in your class. Now come into my class and I'll show you.' (Graduate)

In one school, the approach to the observations was casual but, in the eyes of both graduate and mentor, very effective:

I'd just happen to be around (while the graduate was taking Phys Ed classes). I'd be there fixing something or doing something. I'd see what she did – time management, body position is about classroom management. And then I would just raise things casually, or invite her to observe me doing the same things. I'd give feedback that was based on my own experience. The feedback was very detailed. A lot on lesson planning and providing different activities for a range of abilities. (Mentor)

Some participants believed that the main strength of the more casual, flexible approaches to classroom observations was the high degree of collegiality and trust built up between mentors and graduate teachers. Meetings and conversations between the mentors and graduates were more frequent under these arrangements, and appeared to have resulted in effective classroom work, as mentors and graduates worked 'shoulder to shoulder'. Graduates and mentors in these kinds of partnerships clearly felt that the classroom observations provided opportunities for valuable professional learning.

It was also apparent, however, that the 'shoulder to shoulder' model did not always lead to learning of the quality that was promoted by the more formal and demanding approaches suggested in the VIT July workshops. Teachers in schools that did carry out these VIT recommended processes used standards and rubrics as the focus of pre and post observation discussions and to strengthen the classroom assessments of the graduate teachers' performance. As noted above, the less rigorous, more flexible approaches of the other schools tended to favour the traditional, 'handy hints' advice modes of the past, where the experienced teacher simply passed on useful tips and showed the less experienced teacher some basic tactics and strategies to maintain classroom order. These usually fell short of engaging the graduates in discussions that focussed on the standards. They often had more to do with the new teachers surviving the 'realities' of the classroom than deepening their professional knowledge.

Learning from the 'list of professional activities' task

Only 54 per cent of graduates agreed that completing the list of professional activities had deepened their knowledge of the standards. This contrasted with the views of principals, 98 per cent of whom agreed. The figure for the mentors was 81 per cent. (Figure 4)

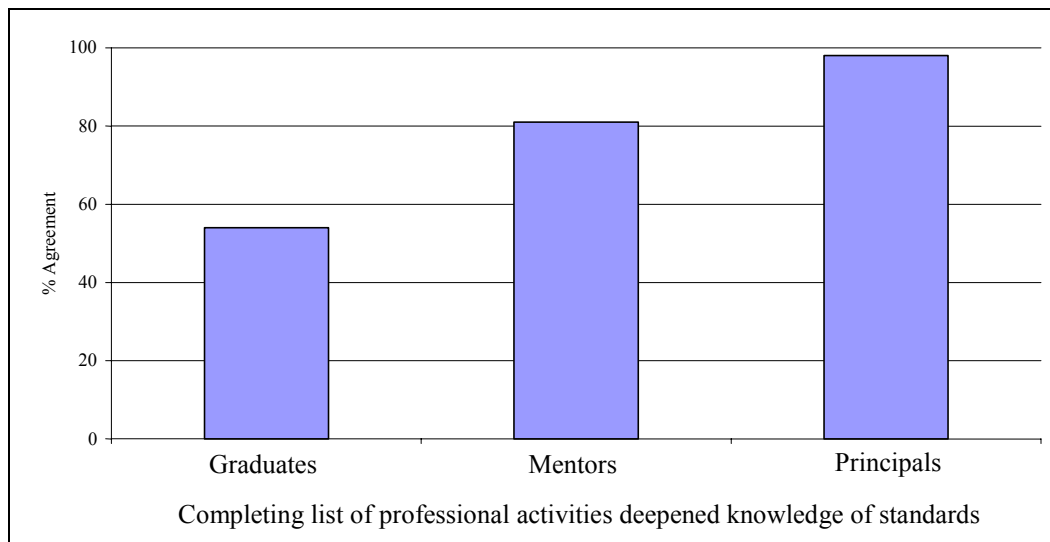


Figure 4

Seventy-eight per cent of graduates, 93 per cent of mentors and 97 per cent of principals agreed that completing the list of professional activities gave graduates a good chance to show that they met the relevant standards for professional engagement. (Figure 5)

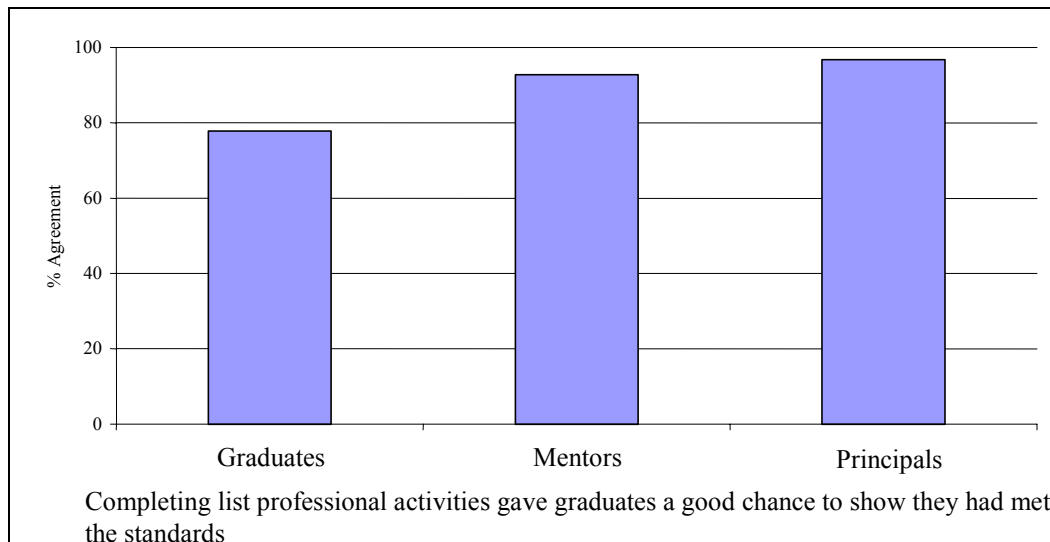


Figure 5

In the case study interviews, all of the graduates and mentors said that they found this an 'easy', 'undemanding' task. Principals and mentors saw it as an efficient and reasonably effective way of providing evidence that the graduates had met the relevant standards. When probed, the graduates said that they had not spent much time on this portfolio entry. No reflection was required. All had 'looked at' the standards, but said that they had not 'connected' the standards with the task to the same extent as for the first two tasks.

This was fine. My mentor suggested that I should just keep a list of everything I was doing outside the classroom – meetings and PDs and parent teacher interviews – I did look at the standards, and sort of used them as a check list to make sure I had everything covered. (Graduate)

Professional learning of mentors

Mentors saw their participation in the project as a valuable professional learning experience. Ninety-seven per cent of mentors believed that their knowledge of the standards had grown substantially, and 81 % believed that the processes had a highly beneficial effect on their own teaching. (Figure 6)

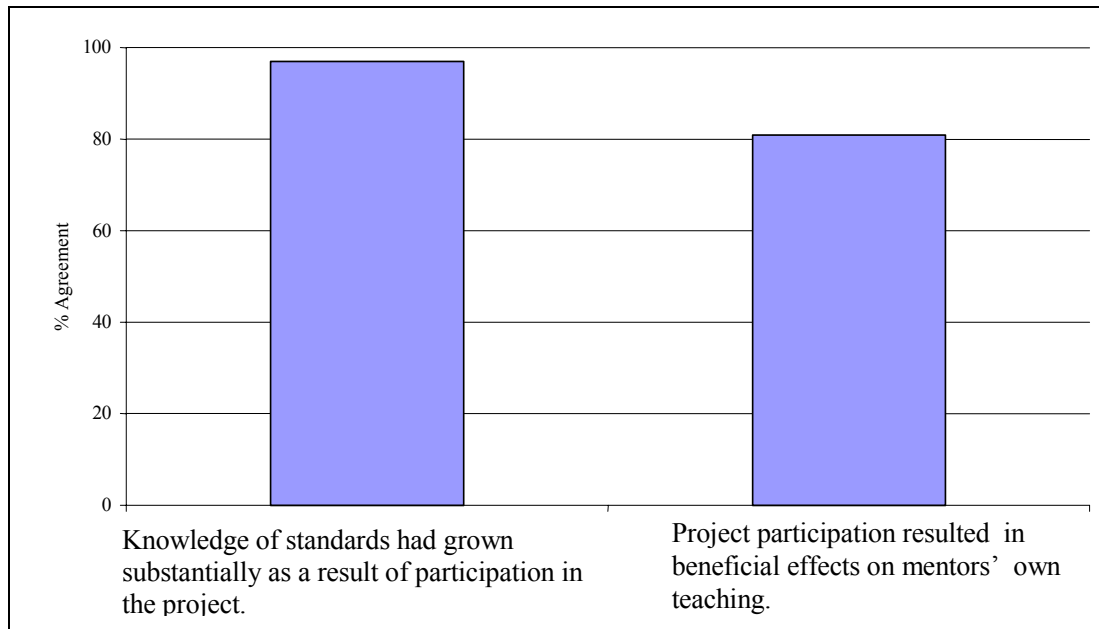


Figure 6

Most of the mentors interviewed said that the time they invested in the processes was professionally rewarding and had led to the development of new insights about their own teaching.

I'd definitely do it again. It has been a professionally rewarding experience and I learnt what I didn't know I didn't know - if that makes sense.

(Graduates) were learning what they needed to know now. They were lucky to be doing it now. Instead of learning five or six years in, like us. Some new things I've personally only learnt now from working with my graduate, like – you know – so that's what that means if you do it that way...

2. Professional collaboration

Information from the surveys and interviews indicated that graduates and mentors developed an appreciation of the value of professional collaboration as a result of their experiences of the project. A high degree of trust was built up between mentors and graduates. Ninety per cent of graduates, 95 % of mentors and 100 % of principals agreed that the mentor had the necessary professional knowledge and experience to provide effective feedback on the SWBPT. (Figure 7)

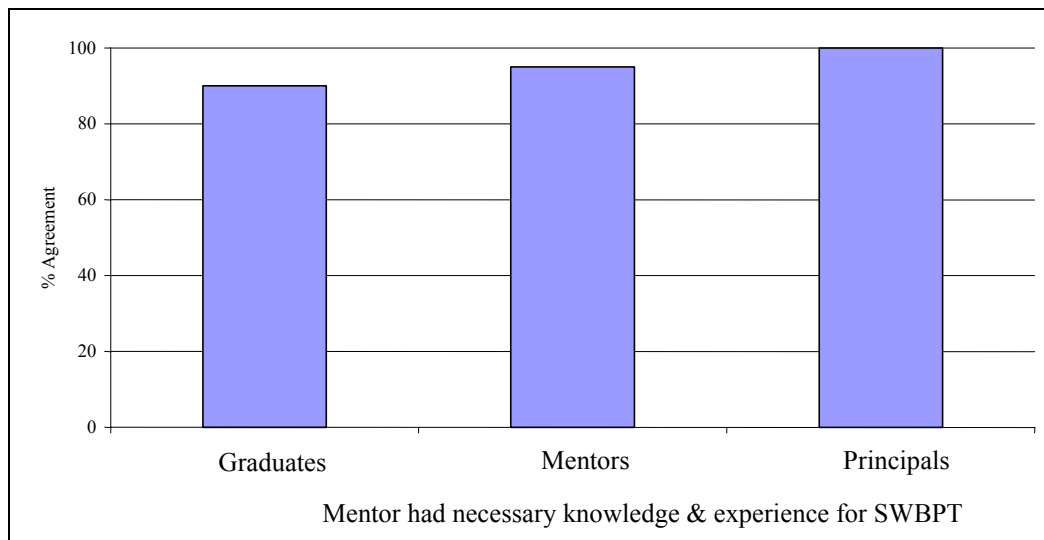


Figure 7

Ninety-three per cent of graduates, 96 % of mentors and 100 % of principals surveyed believed that the mentor had the necessary knowledge and experience to provide effective feedback on the classroom observations. (Figure 8)

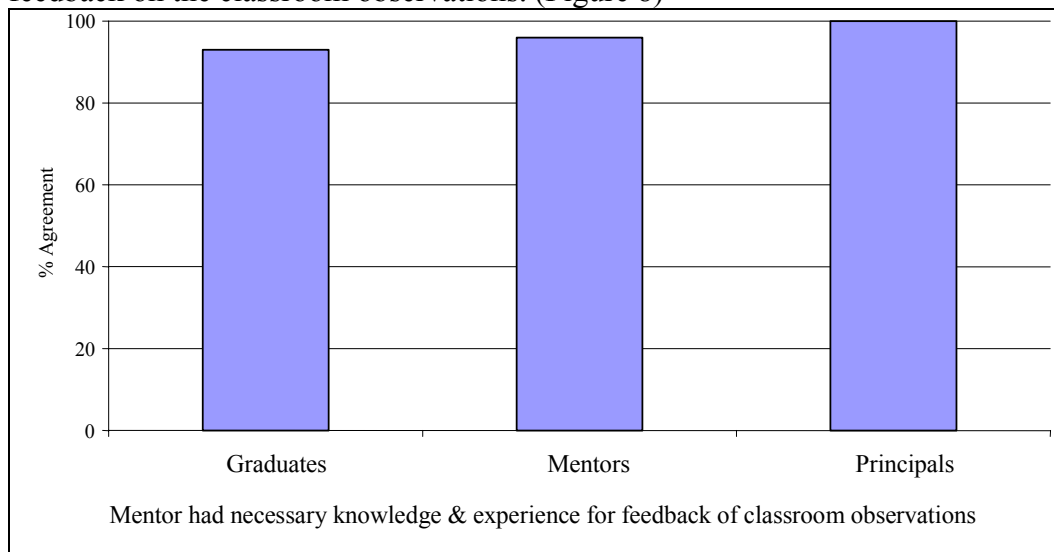


Figure 8

Ninety-six per cent of graduates agreed that working with their mentor and other teachers in the project showed them the value of collaboration and teamwork. This view was shared by 90 per cent of mentors and 89 per cent of principals. (Figure 9)

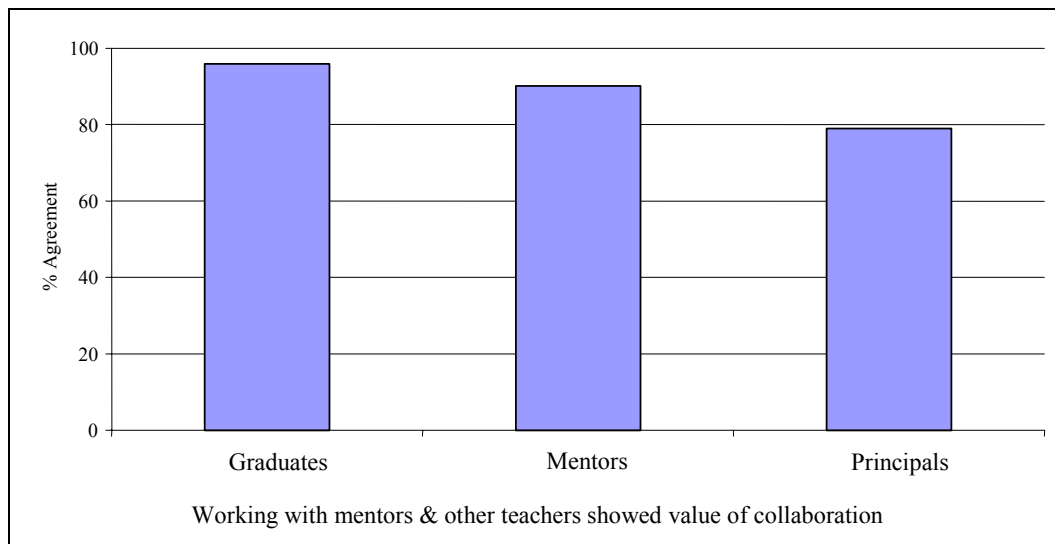


Figure 9

Interview and survey information showed that the best mentoring relationships occurred when graduates and mentors were in the same learning teams, or subject departments. Teaching in a different subject area/learning team was the main reason given for the relatively few break-downs in the mentoring relationships.

The value of graduates reflecting on teaching experiences with their mentors came up spontaneously in several interviews:

We definitely learnt a lot. Especially from the reflecting with our mentors. The reflections were the most rewarding part. It was also very challenging. The standards just fitted in. If you weren't doing them, something would be wrong. It would soon be obvious. (Graduate)

Graduates said they had learnt the value of open, collaborative working relationships for improving the quality of their teaching. They wanted to keep teaching in these ways:

In years to come, if I can keep my doors open, I'll do it. (Graduate)

All case study schools had had induction and mentoring programs in operation for some years, but project participants agreed that VIT standards provided a focus for professional discussions of higher quality. As one principal put it:

In the past, the induction process was more about settling people into the school. Our original induction program did have mentors, but it was not about the teaching processes. This is important. The relationship between the mentor and the graduate is a professional learning relationship. It's not just about having a mate in the school. (Principal)

Completing the portfolio tasks provided an impetus and motivation for graduates to seek the help of others, mainly their mentors:

The Student Work Based Portfolio Task was pitched at a very high level. That is what made it valuable. Graduates needed the expertise and knowledge of the mentors and

other teachers. They really needed the help. So they had to communicate with their mentors. (Mentor)

The administrators in all the case study schools provided strong practical support for their teachers' participation in the project. Informal discussions among teachers at the workshops and moderation/review sessions suggested that this was the case in most schools. For example, most had made provision for timetabled periods for the graduates and mentors to meet. Project participants said that they felt 'special' because they saw themselves as being part of a wider project. They appreciated the training and moderation/review days that were organised for them by the VIT. They also felt that their feedback was valued and that it was influencing the development of the standards and total course of the project.

3. The panel processes for assessment of portfolio entries against the VIT professional teaching standards

Information gathered from the surveys showed broad satisfaction with the panel processes. Eighty-eight per cent of graduates, 93 per cent of mentors and 83 per cent of principals believed that the three portfolio entries provided the panel with sufficient evidence to judge whether standards had been met. (Figure 10)

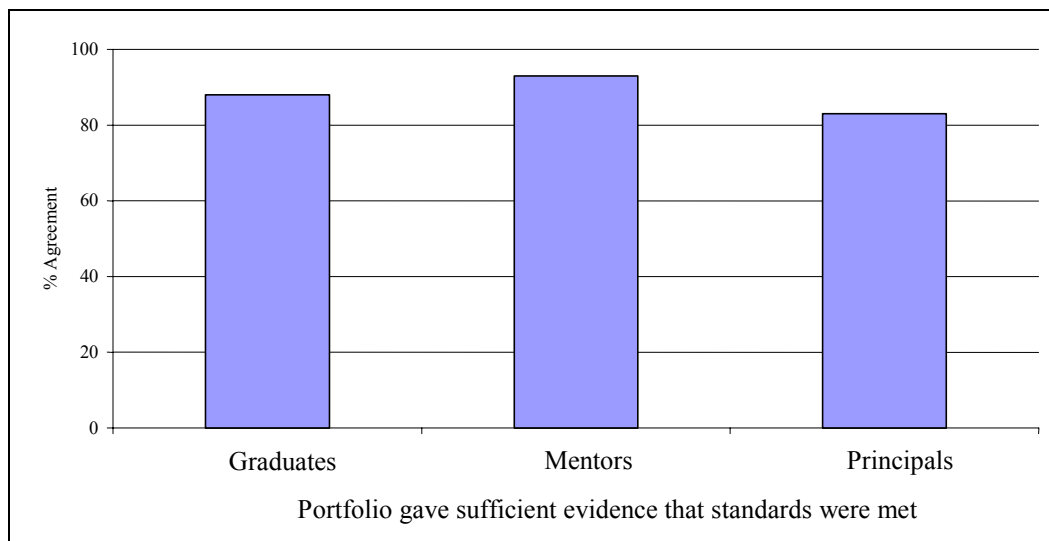


Figure 10

Ninety per cent of graduates, 91 per cent of mentors (who were also panel members) and 100 per cent of principals agreed that the principal and panel gave feedback that was grounded in the VIT standards. (Figure 11)

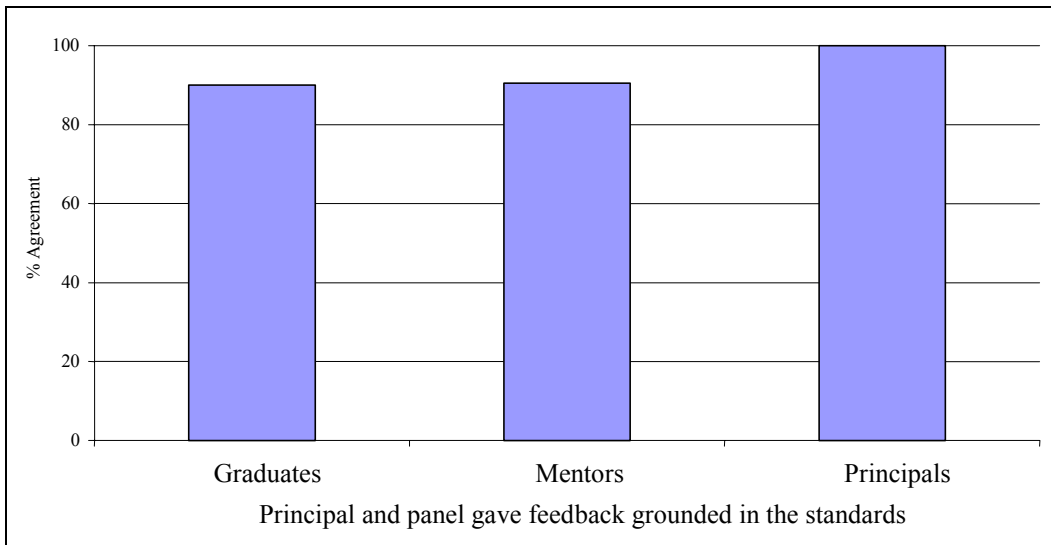


Figure 11

Eighty-three per cent of graduates 88 per cent of mentors/panel members and 88 per cent of principals agreed that the principal and panel members drew strongly upon their knowledge and understanding of the VIT standards to make their judgement about graduates' eligibility to gain full registration. (Figure 12)

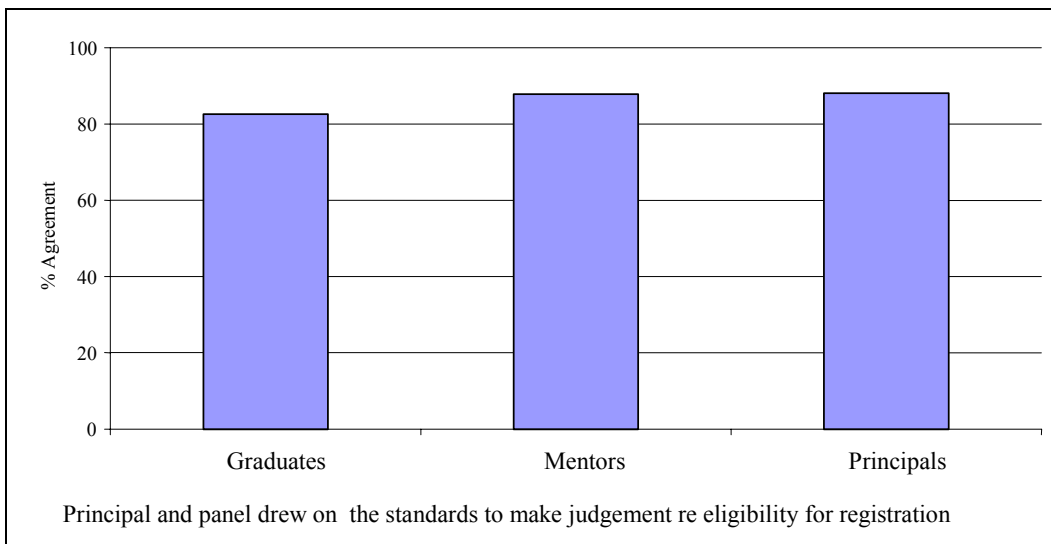


Figure 12

More than 90 per cent of all respondents believed that the assessment was fair. (Figure 13)

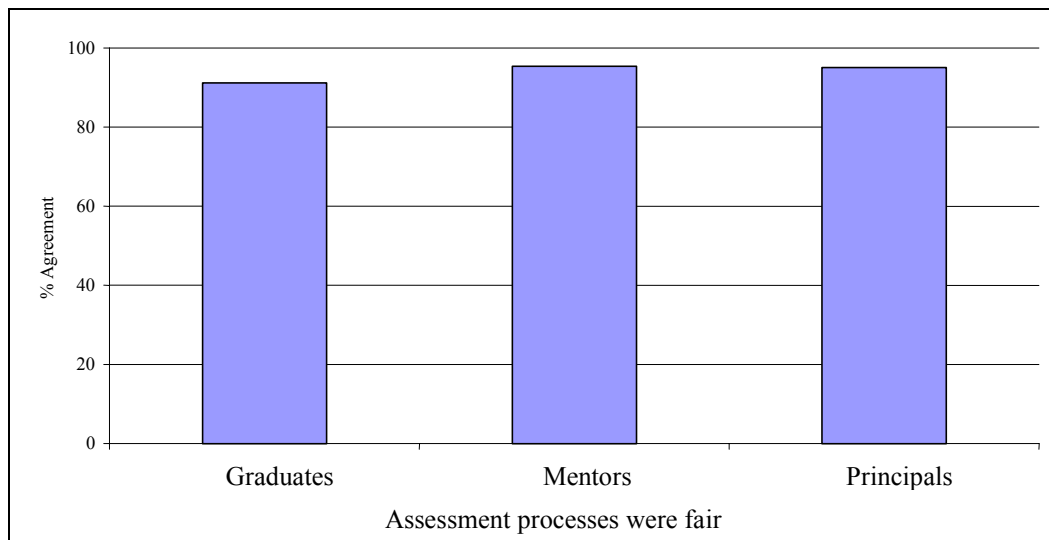


Figure 13

Interviews with teachers in the case study schools, however, revealed a more complex picture. In one school, the principal pointed out, accurately, that schools were not ‘required’ to set up assessment panels. He had chosen an alternative process: in place of the formal panel interview, he simply called graduates in to his office and congratulated them.

This principal believed that he had good reasons for deciding on this course of action. The main one, he said, was that he and the Deputy Principal, as well as the mentors, already knew very well that all graduates exceeded the standards for full registration. Both he and the Deputy Principal acted as extra mentors. They took a keen interest in the graduates’ progress, visited their classrooms, informally, every day, and had regular discussions with graduates and mentors. Another reason was that the school had a relatively large number of graduates in the project, and he was conscious of the time that a full panel process would take from other work:

I and the Assistant Principal are actually mentors – but not the main mentor – for all the graduates. They talk to us and we observe and make suggestions all the time. The school architecture supports this and it’s the culture of the school. We also had regular meetings. Every time we got to a different stage we’d get together and show each other. We bounced ideas around. Lots of professional interaction. So I didn’t feel a formal panel type assessment for each graduate was necessary or appropriate. I knew that every one of them had wildly exceeded the expectations. I just called them all together and congratulated them. We had been hands on together for the whole year.
(Principal)

The graduates in this school had made a decision to develop their portfolios in electronic form. They included videos of classroom teaching, together with recorded reflections with the mentors on aspects of their performance. The graduates had presented their developing portfolios to other staff and the principal often during the course of the project. (The ACER evaluator who visited this school viewed the portfolios and found them very impressive in content as well as presentation.)

Principals in all the other case study schools had convened panels in accordance with the guidelines, but approaches varied. The most common comment from principals and mentors who were panel members was that there was little point in spending too much time on formal assessment processes, because ‘everyone’ knew that the graduate’s performance had far exceeded the VIT requirements:

The graduate was clearly outstanding. The principal knew this all along. We didn’t follow the panel processes to the letter. We knew that in this case there was no issue to do with meeting the standards. (Mentor)

All graduates interviewed said that they had been ‘satisfied’ with the processes used to decide on their recommendation for full registration at their school, and all believed that they had been treated fairly. Several questioned the need for a panel process, on the grounds that the principal and mentors were already familiar with their work. Some said that they had been confused about who would make a final evaluation of their portfolios. A number of graduates reported a sense of anti-climax. Some were surprised that their portfolio was to be assessed in the school. They had been under the impression that this would be done outside the school by the VIT:

There was some misunderstanding in this school. A number of people thought the portfolio was going to go somewhere to be assessed. (Mentor)

The graduate was surprised that the portfolio was not going beyond the school to be assessed. (Principal)

(The evaluators spoke to several graduates at the review/portfolio meetings who were under this same misapprehension.)

The survey results suggested strongly that principals had good knowledge and understanding of the VIT standards. Some mentors and graduates, however, said that their principals were too busy with other aspects of their work to develop deep knowledge of the standards. At least one principal confessed a lack of familiarity with the standards:

The standards had to be given to me and I studied up on them before the meeting because I didn’t have much idea about this particular stuff. (Principal)

Graduates and mentors in all the schools expressed varying degrees of disappointment in the ‘recommendation’ form that principals were required to complete to record their decision to award the graduate full registration. (This was the only document that was required to be forwarded to the VIT.) Most graduates and mentors felt that the form’s requirements for a ‘brief outline of evidence’ did not do justice to the amount of work that had been put into the portfolios. Some complained that the form, and also the comments made by panel members at the interview, were inadequate in terms of providing useful feedback on their performance. Several graduates remarked that the panel would have been in a better position to make their judgements had they observed their actual teaching in the classroom.

A mentor in one school had strong concerns about whether the principal was the most appropriate person to complete and sign the ‘recommendation’ form. She commented that, because the school was a very large organisation, the principal was a very busy person who

worked across many areas and could not be expected to have the kind of knowledge of people like the mentors who had had close involvement from the start.

We followed the guidelines very closely here. The principal convened the panel and filled in the form and made the recommendation. But she was the person who had least involvement in the project. The principals are not the best people to write the comments. They may not be in a position to know. Her comments were too general. The graduates were looking for recognition and feedback. This should be a really affirming exercise. We have to be careful it doesn't become a paper making exercise.
(Mentor)

This mentor, with the principal's approval, had given her graduate a separate written assessment that contained thoughtful and considered comments against VIT standards, and offered formal congratulations on the fine work that had been done.

PART 5 : DISCUSSION

This report has addressed four main areas of the standards and professional learning project:

1. The development of standards of professional practice for entry to the teaching profession;
2. The development of a portfolio-based professional learning and assessment framework for graduates, supported by a mentor and induction program;
3. Formative assessment and feedback from the mentors;
4. Assessment processes for deciding graduates' eligibility to move from provisional to full registration.

In this section of the report, we comment briefly on each of these areas.

1. The development of standards of professional practice for entry to the teaching profession

The process of developing the standards was carried out efficiently and effectively. The SPLB developed an interim set of standards that drew on Australian and overseas models to incorporate current best practice in terms of standards 'architecture' and content. These interim standards were ready for consultation at the start of 2003.

The generally positive response of teachers to these interim standards indicates that they accurately reflect Victorian teachers' practice. During the year, the standards were refined and developed in an iterative process that was marked by high levels of consultation with teachers, key stakeholders and peak organisations. The SLPB team were sensitive to the views expressed. Their responses were timely and appropriate. Teachers with whom we spoke said they felt their views had been 'listened to' and were well represented in the various drafts of the standards.

The final draft of the standards was completed and accepted by the Victorian Minister for Education by the end of 2003, in time for the 2004 school year. The Standards will be the basis of processes that will lead more than 3000 graduates through the transition from provisional to full registration in the future.

We believe that the SPLB team were wise to develop, at this stage, standards and assessments for this one level ('full registration') only. By choosing to proceed in this way, rather than attempting to develop standards for other levels as well, the SPLB was able to move ahead in a focused, efficient and productive manner, undistracted by the many issues that can affect multi-level standards development. This resulted in the production of an effective set of standards and a starting point for future standards development at other levels.

2. The development of a portfolio-based professional learning and assessment framework for graduates, supported by a mentor and induction program

The SLPB faced a major challenge in attempting to establish a portfolio-based professional learning and assessment framework for provisionally registered teachers. This framework was the first of its kind in Australia. It broke new ground in inducting new teachers into the profession, setting up learning experiences on the basis of professionally agreed standards, and documenting practice to support evidence based assessment of progress.

At the start of 2003, the view that learning to teach was something that happened only at university was still held by some education stakeholders. Most schools in Victoria had induction programs, but their most usual purpose was to help the new teacher to feel comfortable in the new school environment. Asking graduate teachers to complete the three tasks that made up the portfolio was both novel and challenging.

The evaluation findings presented in this paper support the findings of VIT's own evaluations that were carried out in the course of the project. These findings show that teachers, mentors and principals supported the portfolio tasks and that powerful professional learning of a magnitude likely to have strong positive effects on graduates' subsequent careers had occurred. Mentors too made changes to their practice as a result of their own learning from the project. Excellent relationships developed between graduates and mentors. This meant increased levels of collaboration, which showed signs of spreading beyond the graduates and mentors to other teachers. In the future, if these or similar processes are followed, all teachers will eventually be familiar with the standards and able to use them for professional advancement.

The Student Work Based Portfolio Task was a well structured, 'authentic' activity that gave graduate teachers maximum opportunity to use the standards to support their learning. While graduates found this task demanding, most agreed that it led them to improve, as they applied the standards to their practice and used them to monitor their own progress.

The classroom observation task was remarkable for its success, in many schools, in breaking down the long-standing taboos on teachers opening up their practice to the scrutiny of colleagues. The positive effects experienced by many of the teachers who participated in this activity are likely to add considerable support to the trend towards 'deprivatisation of practice', and moves to develop more open and collaborative teaching arrangements in schools.

Graduate teachers and their mentors can learn effectively from the ‘shoulder to shoulder’ model of mentors and teachers working together in the classroom. It is important, however, that the standards are not forgotten as two or more teachers strive to build pleasant and positive learning environments. A number of teachers we spoke to in the course of the project expressed strong distaste for an observation model in which one teacher, usually the more experienced teacher observes another, using a standards based rubric. But teachers in case study schools where this observation model was followed showed signs of more effective standards-related learning than teachers in schools that followed the informal model, where there was a tendency to emphasise classroom management at the expense of the more complex attributes of the teaching knowledge base that are articulated in the standards.

The ‘shoulder to shoulder’ classroom observation and mentoring model appears to sit well with the values and culture of teachers in Victorian schools. Teachers seem comfortable with this model and it is a powerful means of building collaboration. It may have its limitations, however. As previously discussed, lack of rigour in the observations, and not referring to standards of practice, can lead to an overemphasis on classroom management issues and to a ‘handy hints model’ of mentoring. On the other hand, as teachers were quick to point out, there is no room in the Victorian education system for a rigid, hierarchical, ‘check list’ approach to classroom observation. We believe there is a strong case for developing observation procedures that combine the best of the models that were seen in this project.

Of the three portfolio tasks, it appears that the ‘list of professional activities’ task was the least onerous, but it also yielded the lowest results in terms of graduates’ professional learning against the relevant standards. We are in no doubt that this was the weakest of the three tasks. Professional engagement is an important area of the knowledge base of teaching. We believe that relevant tasks will need further consideration, including the development of guidelines, so that graduates see clear links between the activities and the standards.

This task needs to be seen in its context as one part of a very demanding portfolio exercise for which there were no precedents in this state. In this high stakes context, the requirement for graduates to simply complete a list of the professional activities they had engaged in during the year was realistic and achievable. In the future, however, these activities will need to be more closely related to the standards for professional engagement, and the task may need to be reworked to provide greater opportunities for reflection, and more convincing evidence of meeting the standards.

3. The ‘panel’ assessment processes

The main purpose of the assessments of graduates’ performance that were conducted at the end of the year by school based panels was to make a recommendation to the VIT as to whether the graduate should be considered eligible to move from ‘provisional’ to ‘full’ registration as a teacher. In effect, a positive decision would admit the graduate to full membership of the teaching profession in Victoria. The job of the panel was to assess whether, on the basis of the evidence presented in the portfolio, the graduate met the requirements set by the standards.

These assessment processes were set up to enable the VIT to fulfil its responsibility, as a statutory body, to guarantee that the performance of all teachers who were awarded full

registration met the VIT teaching standards. The panel processes marked a very important decision point.

In all high stakes assessments – and this was certainly high stakes - processes need to be rigorous, valid, and fair. The assessors need to be credible, and skilled in making judgements of performance. In this case, because the VIT is a statewide body, processes also needed to be consistent across all schools in the state.

If the process for assessing graduates for registration purposes is to build its credibility with the profession and public, attention to the following considerations will be needed:

1. Rigour

Rigour, in this process, meant that all panel members should study the evidence presented in the portfolios and make considered judgements against the standards. While the survey information suggests that most panel members made conscientious efforts to do this, evidence from some case study interviews and other anecdotal evidence based on our conversations with teachers involved in the project, indicates that not all panel members had the necessary time for this demanding task. Many felt that they were not adequately trained. Panel members, including principals, received less than one day of assessor training.

Only 50 per cent of mentors and principals and 49 per cent of graduates surveyed agreed that sufficient time and resources were allocated for aspects of the panel assessment in their schools. These figures are hardly surprising: setting up and conducting these assessments is only one of many non-teaching tasks required of school administrators. At the time of year the assessments were carried out, principals were finalising staffing arrangements for 2004, conducting job interviews for new teachers, filling positions of responsibility, overseeing transition and orientation activities for new students, revising courses and timetables, and making complex decisions about teacher allotments and allocation of resources. All this was in addition to the usual management of finances, school council responsibilities and dealing with the day-to-day needs of students and their parents. This context alone makes it very difficult for a school to establish and conduct a rigorous assessment process.

The panels were entrusted with making a significant decision – arguably one with highly important consequences for the Victorian education system – that of recommending to the VIT who should enter the teaching profession in this state. We question whether principals recognised the broader significance of their roles as the people who were responsible for this recommendation. For example, the principal in one case study school (primary government metropolitan) decided not to conduct a panel assessment but simply to call in the four graduate teachers and congratulate them. This was a considered time management decision and, in the circumstances, probably a sound one. But the final assessment process in this school, while understandable, might not stand up to legal scrutiny.

Validity

A valid assessment is one that has the capacity to measure what it sets out to measure. The more complex the activity, the greater are the assessment challenges in terms of validity. The

simple ‘check list’ assessments that are sometimes still used to evaluate teachers’ performance lack validity because their structure and content are too superficial to recognise, understand and assess what is really going on in teachers’ professional work.

A valid assessment of teaching performance needs to be based on standards that articulate what it is that teachers know and are able to do. This is the first requirement. The second is for evidence to be gathered that is of sufficient range and quality for assessors to make judgements about the teachers’ performance.

Our survey and case studies showed that panels used the VIT standards as the basis for making judgements. Most participants agreed that the three portfolio tasks provided sufficient evidence for panel members to make valid judgements about their performance. We are satisfied that this is true of the first task, but less so about the remaining two tasks.

We have reservations about the sufficiency and suitability of the evidence required for the third task (list of professional activities) to provide evidence of meeting the standards. The VIT’s professional engagement standards articulate important and complex areas of teachers’ professional practice. We do not believe that the present task allows graduates to present evidence of sufficient quantity and quality to allow the panel to make accurate judgements about whether the standards have been met.

We also have reservations about the sufficiency and quality of the evidence that was generated from the classroom observation task. Panel members saw no direct evidence of classroom teaching performance. In trying to judge whether the graduate met the relevant standards, the panel had to rely on indirect evidence provided by the mentor and graduate. Because of the indirect and uneven nature of this evidence, because of problems inherent in the mentor/assessor role-conflict, and because of other, inter-personal, issues in some mentor/graduate relationships, we believe that the extent to which this evidence can be relied upon as a basis for making accurate judgements against the standards is questionable. We believe that direct observation is the best way for assessors to make judgements about teachers’ classroom performance. If this is not practicable, the best alternative is to video the teacher’s performance. (Videos have the additional advantage of allowing teachers to reflect and provide commentaries on their own performance. This is a valuable professional learning exercise.)

Fairness

Over 90 percent of graduates surveyed, and over 95 per cent of mentors and principals agreed that the panel assessment processes in their schools were fair. This means that 10%, or approximately sixteen graduates were *not* satisfied that they had been fairly assessed. This may be sixteen too many, in view of the high stakes nature of the assessment. It raises questions about the capacity of schools to make consistently fair, unbiased assessments about teachers’ performance. The issue of fairness has already arisen in Victoria, in connection with school-based assessments for the Experienced Teacher With Responsibility (ETWR) position, with large numbers of teachers complaining to the Merit Protection Board about unfair processes in their schools. (One teacher in our survey actually made the additional comment: ‘We don’t want another ETWR situation.’) Lack of fairness has also been recognised as a serious flaw in the school based assessment procedures for the British ‘Threshold’ position. If

the assessment procedures for full registration used in this project are extended to all graduates (approximately 3000 per year) attention to issues of fairness will be needed.

Credibility of assessors

The assessment panel comprised the school principal, a mentor (if available) who was not the mentor of the graduate, and a teacher chosen by the graduate.

Principals and mentors received less than one day of training in assessment. As Charlotte Danielson pointed out, this compares poorly with assessor training for similar processes in the United States, where four days is considered necessary to ensure reliability.

Research in many countries has shown that principals tend to be less reliable assessors of teachers' performance than other teachers, especially those who teach in the same subject or year levels. The panel composition only partly reflects these research findings, since, in effect, the principal is the chief assessor who is responsible for compiling the final report.

Statewide consistency

Even in the relatively small sample of schools in this project, principals chose to implement the guidelines for the panel assessment process in different ways. The most common comment, in the case study interviews, was that because that the panel already 'knew' that the graduates' work exceeded the requirements of the standards, a rigorous panel assessment process was, in one sense, unnecessary. Some participants perceived the panel processes as a kind of afterthought which, at best, gave the graduates a chance to 'showcase' their achievements.

The notion of assessors 'knowing' about the quality of a teachers' work before the assessment processes commence has obvious dangers. If some school panels arrive at their judgements on the basis of evidence outside the portfolio processes – for example, if some but not others base the assessment partly on what is already 'known' about the graduates' performance - the VIT may have difficulty defending the assessment procedures in terms of their consistency.

A related issue is that, in many schools, the burden of the panel assessment process is seen to duplicate other processes, such as those for performance review. To avoid this perceived duplication of work, some schools have suggested that the Institute's requirements be incorporated into existing processes that were established for other purposes, such as annual reviews. However, systems for annual review of teacher performance in Victorian schools have attracted wide criticism on grounds of their superficiality and failure to respect and address the complexity of teachers' work. This is precisely the problem the SPLB tried to overcome by setting up a comprehensive professional learning and assessment framework for graduate teachers in their first year of teaching. In our view, consideration should be given to restricting performance reviews to fully registered teachers, and using the VIT registration process for provisionally registered teachers.

It is important to preserve the existing distinction between processes designed to satisfy employer requirements for satisfactory performance, and processes that serve the purposes of the VIT as a profession wide regulatory body.

Concluding comments

We are in no doubt that, as a professional learning experience for graduate teachers, the VIT's Standards and Professional Learning Project 2003 was an outstanding success. The development of the Standards of Professional Practice for Full Registration, the construction of the portfolio tasks and the nurturing of the graduate mentor relationship in schools led to significant improvements in practice for both graduates and mentors. Information from our survey, case studies and conversations with teachers showed that levels of knowledge among teachers about teaching standards and levels of professional collaboration in schools demonstrably increased as a direct result of the work of this project.

We doubt, however, that the summative assessment processes for making the crucial recommendation for full registration were sufficiently rigorous, valid, fair and consistent to provide reliable guarantees of graduates' eligibility to gain full registration and entry to the profession.

This may have implications for the professional learning of graduates in the future. Clearly, many graduate participants in the project expected a much more demanding summative assessment than they actually experienced. Most were unsure of how the assessment would be carried out. Because it had never been done before, they did not have precedents on which to base expectations of rigour or lack thereof. Many graduates invested large amounts of work and effort to produce portfolios of excellent quality, in the belief that there would be a rigorous assessment. They were disappointed that they did not receive more formal recognition of a kind that matched the seriousness with which they prepared their portfolios. They also would have welcomed more detailed feedback on their development and progress.

We have concerns that if, in future, the summative assessment is perceived to be lacking in rigour, the quality of the graduates' professional learning might be threatened. Assessment is a crucial component of learning. The integrity of the VIT assessment for full teacher registration will need to be closely guarded, not only to maintain the VIT's credibility as a body that provides public guarantees of teacher quality, but also in order that the quality of graduates' professional learning, the great achievement of this project, will be sustained.

In all professions, rigorously implemented, high entrance standards protect members by ensuring that only the competent are admitted and allowed to practice. Professional standards and rigorous assessment against them provide guarantees upon which professions gain public status and trust. Teachers need to know that they belong to a profession that has the capacity to provide reliable guarantees of quality. This alone is a powerful reason to ensure that final assessment processes meet stringent effectiveness criteria.

Elizabeth Kleinhenz and Lawrence Ingvarson, April 2004.



*Evaluation of the
Victorian Institute of
Teaching Standards and
Professional Learning
Project 2004*

CONFIDENTIAL

About this questionnaire

Who? This survey has been sent to all graduate teachers who participated in the Victorian Institute of *Teaching Standards and Professional Learning Project* in 2003.

Why? The survey forms part of the evaluation of the *Project*, and is part of a range of data collection strategies designed to measure its impact.

What? It asks for information about your experiences and opinions as a graduate teacher in the project.

How? For most questions you only need to tick a box.

When? Please complete and return the survey within a week of receiving it. (The timelines for the project are very tight.)

Where? Use the envelope that accompanies this questionnaire. If you misplace the envelope, then send the completed survey to:

***Dr Elizabeth Kleinhenz
Freepost 444 (VIT)
Australian Council for Educational Research
Private Bag 55
Camberwell 3124
Victoria.***

If you use this address, you do not need to pay any postage.

If you choose not to complete the survey, could you still return the blank survey form to us so that we do not send you reminders. This will save both of us time.

Use of the data The data collected from this survey will be stored at the *Australian Council for Educational Research* (ACER) and used to produce reports for the *Victorian Institute of Teaching*. No individual or school will be identified in any reports produced using data collected for this study. *ACER will treat all information with the strictest confidence.*

About ACER ACER is a not-for-profit, independent research organisation. It was established in 1930. It is perhaps best known for various educational tests and assessments that are used by many schools, but it has also been very active in educational program evaluation for many years.

Any questions? If you have any questions or concerns related to this survey, or the evaluation general, please contact the evaluation project manager at ACER, Dr Elizabeth Kleinhenz. You can contact her on: 03 9277 5654, or by email on kleinhenz@acer.edu.au

SECTION 1 SCHOOL AND TEACHER INFORMATION

Q 1 What is your name

Q 2 What is the name your of your school

Q 3 What is your gender?

Female

Male

Q 4 In what sector is your school?

Please tick one box only.

Government

Catholic

Independent

SECTION 2 The student work based portfolio entry

Q 5 To what extent do you disagree or agree with the following statements about the student work based portfolio entry?

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
a. Completing the student work-based portfolio entry has deepened my understanding of the relevant VIT professional teaching standards.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. The student work based portfolio task gave me a good chance to show how I meet the relevant VIT professional teaching standards.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. My mentor had the necessary professional knowledge and experience to review my student work based portfolio entry and to provide valuable feedback.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. What I learnt from completing the student work based portfolio entry will have a beneficial impact on my teaching in the future.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

SECTION 3 The observation portfolio entries

Q 6 To what extent do you disagree or agree with the following statements about the observation portfolio entries?

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
a. Completing the classroom observation portfolio entries has deepened my understanding of the relevant VIT professional teaching standards.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. The classroom observations gave me a good chance to show how I meet the relevant VIT professional teaching standards.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. My mentor had the necessary professional knowledge and experience to engage with me classroom observations and to provide valuable feedback.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. I have made beneficial changes to my teaching as a result of feedback given to me by my mentor on the basis of classroom observations.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

SECTION 4 The professional activities

Q 7 To what extent do you disagree or agree with the following statements about professional activities?

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
a. Completing the list of professional activities has deepened my understanding of the relevant VIT professional teaching standards.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. The task of providing a list of my professional activities gave me a good chance to show that I had met the relevant VIT standards for ‘Professional Engagement’.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. The task of providing a list of my professional activities was a valid method for assessing whether I had met the VIT standards for ‘Professional Engagement’.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Completing the Professional Engagement entry had a beneficial effect on the extent to which I collaborated with colleagues and engaged with the profession.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

SECTION 5 General comments

Q 8 To what extent do you disagree or agree with the following statements?

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
a. As a result of guidance and feedback from my mentor and other colleagues I have significantly changed aspects of my classroom work for the better	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Other teachers in this school would have been more appropriate to act as my mentor	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reason:				
.....				
c. My mentor used the VIT professional teaching standards as a basis for providing me with guidance and feedback	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. My mentor received sufficient preparation/professional development to carry out his/her mentoring role	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Collaboration and teamwork

e. Working with my mentor and other teachers this year has shown me the value of collaboration and teamwork between teachers in my school.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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VIT Meetings/workshops with teachers from other schools

f. I could not have completed my portfolio as well as I did without the help and support gained from these meetings.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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SECTION 6 Evaluation processes

Q 9 To what extent do you disagree or agree with the following statements?

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
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Final evaluation by the principal and panel

a. My portfolio entries provided the principal and panel with sufficient evidence to judge whether I met the standards for full registration	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. The principal and panel members drew strongly upon their knowledge and understanding of the VIT professional teaching standards to make their judgement about my eligibility to gain full teacher registration	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. The principal and panel gave me feedback that was grounded in the VIT professional teaching standards	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Sufficient time and resources were allocated for all aspects of the final evaluation processes for full teacher registration at my school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. The evaluation processes for teachers seeking full teacher registration in my school were fair.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q 10 Additional comments about evaluation processes

Thank you for completing this questionnaire



*Evaluation of the
Victorian Institute of
Teaching Standards and
Professional Learning
Project 2004*

CONFIDENTIAL

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Any questions? If you have any questions or concerns related to this survey, or the evaluation general, please contact the evaluation project manager at ACER, Dr Elizabeth Kleinhenz. You can contact her on: 03 9277 5654, or by email on kleinhenz@acer.edu.au

SECTION 1 SCHOOL AND TEACHER INFORMATION

Q 11 What is your name

Q 12 What is the name your of your school

Q 13 What is your gender?

Female

Male

Q 14 In what sector is your school?

Please tick one box only.

Government

Catholic

Independent

SECTION 2 The student work based portfolio entry

Q 15 To what extent do you disagree or agree with the following statements about the student work based portfolio entry?

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
e. Completing the student work-based portfolio entry has deepened my graduate's (s') understanding of the relevant VIT professional teaching standards.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. The student work based portfolio task gave my graduate/s a good chance to show how they met the relevant VIT professional teaching standards.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. What my graduate/s learnt as a result of completing the student work based portfolio entry will have a beneficial impact on their teaching in the future.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h. I had the necessary professional knowledge and experience to guide my graduate/s in reviewing their student work based portfolio entries.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

SECTION 3 The observation portfolio entries

Q 16 To what extent do you disagree or agree with the following statements about the observation portfolio entries?

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
e. Completing the classroom observation portfolio entries has deepened my graduate's (s') understanding of the relevant VIT professional teaching standards.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. The classroom observations gave my graduate's (s') a good chance to show how they met the relevant VIT professional teaching standards).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. I had the necessary professional knowledge and experience to engage with my graduate/s in classroom observations, and to provide valuable feedback.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h. My graduate/s have made beneficial changes to their teaching as a result of the feedback I gave on the basis of classroom observations.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

SECTION 4 The professional activities

Q 17 To what extent do you disagree or agree with the following statements about professional activities?

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
e. Completing the list of professional activities has deepened my graduate's (s') understanding of the relevant VIT professional teaching standards.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. The task of providing a list of professional activities gave my graduate/s a good chance to show that they had met the relevant VIT standards for 'Professional Engagement.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. The task of providing a list of professional activities was a valid method for assessing whether my graduate had met the VIT standards for 'Professional Engagement'.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h. Completing the professional engagement entry will have a beneficial effect on the extent to which my graduate/s collaborate with colleagues and engage with the profession.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

SECTION 5 General comments

Q 18 To what extent do you disagree or agree with the following statements?

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
g. As a result of my experiences as a mentor, my knowledge and understanding of the VIT professional teaching standards have grown substantially.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h. My experiences as a mentor had a highly beneficial effect on my own teaching.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i. I used the VIT standards as a basis for providing my graduate(s) with guidance and feedback.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
j. My own teaching changed substantially as a result of my experiences as a mentor.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
k. I had sufficient preparation to carry out my mentoring role.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Collaboration and teamwork

l. Working with my graduate/s and other teachers this year has increased my appreciation of the value of collaboration and teamwork between teachers in my school.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
m. The VIT standards and professional learning project has led to increased collaboration among teachers in this school, including teachers not directly involved in the project.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<p>n. As a result of formative evaluation and feedback from me and other colleagues, my graduate/graduates have changed aspects of their classroom work for the better.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>o. I received the necessary preparation/professional development to effectively perform my mentoring role.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>p. Other teachers in this school would have been more appropriate to act as mentors for my graduate/graduates than I was.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>q. I used the VIT professional teaching standards as a basis for providing the graduate/s with evaluation and feedback.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Reason:</p> <p>.....</p>				

VIT Meetings/workshops with teachers from other schools

<p>r. My graduate/s could not have completed their portfolios as well as they did without the help and support gained from these meetings.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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SECTION 6 Evaluation processes

Q 19 To what extent do you disagree or agree with the following statements?

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
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Final evaluation by the principal and panel

- f. My graduate/s portfolio entries provided the principal and panel with sufficient evidence to judge whether they met the standards for full registration.**

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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The following questions, b to e, are to be answered only by mentors who were panel members. If you are not a mentor you may stop here, or go to the end to add any comments you may wish to make about evaluation processes.

- g. The principal and panel members drew strongly upon their knowledge and understanding of the VIT professional teaching standards to make their judgement about my graduate's eligibility to gain full teacher registration.**

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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- h. The principal and panel gave my graduate/s feedback that was grounded in the VIT professional teaching standards.**

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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- i. Sufficient time and resources were allocated for all aspects of the final evaluation processes for full teacher registration at my school.**

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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- j. The evaluation processes for teachers seeking full teacher registration in my school were fair.**

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Q 20 Additional comments about evaluation processes

Thank you for completing this questionnaire



*Evaluation of the
Victorian Institute of
Teaching Standards and
Professional Learning
Project 2004*

CONFIDENTIAL

About this questionnaire

Who? This survey has been sent to all principals who participated in the Victorian Institute of *Teaching Standards and Professional Learning Project* in 2003.

Why? The survey forms part of the evaluation of the *Project*, and is part of a range of data collection strategies designed to measure its impact.

What? It asks for information about your experiences and opinions as a principals in the project.

How? For most questions you only need to tick a box.

When? Please complete and return the survey within a week of receiving it. (The timelines for the project are very tight.)

Where? Use the envelope that accompanies this questionnaire. If you misplace the envelope, then send the completed survey to:

*Dr Elizabeth Kleinhenz
Freepost 444 (VIT)
Australian Council for Educational Research
Private Bag 55
Camberwell 3124
Victoria.*

If you use this address, you do not need to pay any postage.

If you choose not to complete the survey, could you still return the blank survey form to us so that we do not send you reminders. This will save both of us time.

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SECTION 1 SCHOOL AND TEACHER INFORMATION

Q 21 What is your name

Q 22 What is the name your of your school

Q 23 What is your gender?

Female

Male

Q 24 In what sector is your school?

Please tick one box only.

Government

Catholic

Independent

SECTION 2 The student work based portfolio entry

Q 25 To what extent do you disagree or agree with the following statements about the student work based portfolio entry?

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
i. Completing the student work-based portfolio entry has deepened the graduate's (s') understanding of the relevant VIT professional teaching standards.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
j. The student work based portfolio task gave the graduate/s a good chance to show how they met the relevant VIT professional teaching standards).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
k. The mentor(s) had the necessary professional knowledge and experience to review the student work based portfolio entries and to provide valuable feedback.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
l. Completing the student work based portfolio entry will have a beneficial impact on the graduate/s teaching in the future.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

SECTION 3 The observation portfolio entries

Q 26 To what extent do you disagree or agree with the following statements about the observation portfolio entries?

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
i. Completing the classroom observation portfolio entries has deepened the graduate's (s') understanding of the relevant VIT professional teaching standards.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
j. The classroom observations gave the graduate/s a good chance to show how they meet the relevant VIT professional teaching standards).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
k. The mentor(s) had the necessary professional knowledge and experience to conduct classroom observations and to provide valuable feedback.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
l. The graduate/s have made beneficial changes to their teaching as a result of feedback given by the mentor on the basis of classroom observations.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

SECTION 4 The professional activities

Q 27 To what extent do you disagree or agree with the following statements about professional activities?

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
i. Completing the list of professional activities deepened the graduate's (s') understanding of the relevant VIT professional teaching standards	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
j. The task of providing a list of professional activities gave the graduates a good chance to show that they had met the relevant VIT standards for 'Professional Engagement'	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
k. The task of providing a list of professional activities was a valid method for assessing whether they had met the VIT standards for 'Professional Engagement'	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
l. Completing the professional engagement entry will have a beneficial effect on the extent to which the graduate/s collaborate with colleagues and engage with the profession	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

SECTION 5 General comments

Q 28 To what extent do you disagree or agree with the following statements?

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
s. As a result of my experiences as panel member, my knowledge and understanding of the VIT professional teaching standards grew substantially.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
t. My experiences as a panel member had a highly beneficial influence on my own professional practice.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
u. Other teachers in this school would have been more appropriate to act as mentors for the graduate/graduates than the person chosen who was chosen as the mentor. Reason:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
v. The mentors used the VIT professional teaching standards as a basis for evaluation and feedback.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
w. The mentor(s) received sufficient preparation/professional development to carry out their mentoring role.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Collaboration and teamwork

x. .My experience of the standards and professional learning project has increased my appreciation of the value of collaboration and teamwork between teachers in my school.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
y. The VIT standards and professional learning project has led to increased collaboration among teachers in this school who are not directly involved in the project.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q 28 Continued

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
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VIT Meetings/workshops with teachers from other schools

z. The graduate/s could not have completed their portfolios as well as they did without the help and support gained from these meetings.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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SECTION 6 Evaluation processes

Q 29 To what extent do you disagree or agree with the following statements?

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
Final evaluation by the principal and panel				
k. The graduate's (s') portfolio entries provided the principal and panel with sufficient evidence to judge whether they met the standards for full registration.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
l. The principal and panel members drew strongly upon their knowledge and understanding of the VIT professional teaching standards to make their judgement about the graduate's (s) eligibility to gain full teacher registration.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
m. The principal and panel gave the graduate/s feedback that was grounded in the VIT professional teaching standards.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
n. Sufficient time and resources were allocated for all aspects of the final evaluation processes for full teacher registration at my school.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
o. The evaluation processes for teachers seeking full teacher registration in my school were fair.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q 30 Additional comments about evaluation processes

Thank you for completing this questionnaire

APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW PROTOCOLS

Graduates:

- In what ways did completing the portfolio help you to understand the VIT draft professional teaching standards?

Probe:

To what extent did you refer to/use the standards when completing your portfolio

How did you find them useful? At what points were they most useful?

- Do you feel that you are a better teacher now, for having completed the portfolio processes?

Probe:

What are you doing differently? In what ways has your teaching improved?

What aspects of the portfolio most influenced your teaching practice?

- Could you comment on your actual experiences of completing the portfolio tasks?

Probe:

How do/did you feel about the workload involved?

Can you give examples of how you overcame any obstacles or difficulties?

How did you feel when you had completed all the work?

Was it worthwhile? In what ways?

- How valuable was your experience of mentoring in helping you to complete the VIT requirements for full registration?

Probe:

Were you well supported by your mentor?

What factors contributed to the success of the relationship?

Did anything impede the success of the relationship? Describe.

- Did completing the tasks involve you in extra collaboration with any teachers other than your mentor?

Probe:

Did you seek the advice of colleagues?

Was this helpful?

Did you feel well supported by your principal and other senior colleagues?

- Could you comment on your experiences of participating in the meetings with teachers from other schools that were organised throughout the year by the VIT?

Probe:

Would you have achieved the same results if you had not attended these meetings?

What were the most/least valuable aspects?

- How did you and your mentor organise the classroom observations?

Probe:

Did you use the materials provided at the VIT workshops?

How many observations did you organise?

Did you receive feedback from your mentor in relation to classroom observations? How helpful was this?

- Could you describe your experiences of the panel processes for your final assessment?

Probe:

Were you happy with the composition of the panel?

Were you satisfied that the panel had sufficient evidence to make their judgements?

*Did panel members give you useful feedback? Recognition?
Was there enough time for the processes?
Were the processes fair?*

Mentors:

- In what ways did completing the portfolio help you and the graduate to understand the VIT draft professional teaching standards?

Probe:

What were your initial thoughts about the standards?

Did you find that your ideas changed as you became more familiar with the standards?

How?

To what extent did you refer to/use the standards when mentoring the graduate(s)?

- Do you feel that the graduate(s) is/are a better teacher(s) now, for having completed the portfolio processes?

Probe:

How do you think the graduates' teaching may have been different, had they not completed these processes?

Which aspects of the processes do you think were most beneficial to the graduates' teaching?

What sort of feedback did you give your graduate in relation to classroom observations?

Did your graduate take up your suggestions? (That is, did you see change in subsequent observations?)

- How valuable was this whole 2003 experience for your own professional learning?

Probe:

Could you comment on your experiences of mentoring the graduate(s)?

What are the main things you learnt from participating in the project?

What aspects of the project have been most significant for your own professional learning?

Has your own teaching changed as a result of your participation? How? What, if anything, are you now doing differently?

- How do/did you feel about the workload involved for yourself and the graduate(s)?

Probe:

Were you well supported by your principal/other colleagues?

What kinds of support were provided by the school administration/other colleagues?

Could you suggest any changes to the portfolio that might reduce the workload without compromising quality?

- Did mentoring the graduate involve you in extra collaboration with any teachers other than your graduate?

Probe:

How aware of the portfolio processes were colleagues who were not directly involved in the project?

Did you seek the advice of colleagues? Was this helpful?

Did any of your colleagues volunteer to assist/advise you in your mentoring role?

- How were the mentoring experiences of 2003 in your school different from those of other years?

Probe:

How were mentoring/induction processes previously structured?

What was their main content?

What changed, in terms of structure and content, in 2003?

- Could you comment on your experiences of participating in the meetings with teachers from other schools that were organised throughout the year by the VIT?

Probe:

Did you attend all meetings?

Which did you find most valuable? Why?

- Could you describe your experiences of the panel processes for your final evaluation?

Probe:

Were you satisfied with the composition of the panel?

Was there enough time?

Were you satisfied that the panel had sufficient evidence to make their judgements?

Were the processes fair?

Principals:

- In what ways did your school's participation in this project help you, the mentor(s) the graduate(s) and other colleagues to understand the VIT draft professional teaching standards?

Probe:

What were your initial thoughts about the standards?

Did you find that your ideas changed as you became more familiar with the standards?

How?

How would you rate your own current knowledge/understanding of the VIT draft standards?

Do you think the standards were useful for the graduates' professional learning? How?

Do you think the mentors developed more sophisticated understandings of the standards as the project progressed?

Did other staff members develop their understandings of the standards during the course of this project? In what ways? Are they generally supportive of the standards as a basis for professional learning?

- Could you describe your role and involvement in the VIT Standards and Professional Learning project processes for awarding teachers full registration in this school?

Probe:

When did you decide to join the project?

Why?

How involved have you been, personally, in the project?

Did you attend any VIT meetings during the year?

- Do you feel that the graduate(s) is/are a better teacher(s) now, for having completed the portfolio processes?

Probe:

How have you observed the graduates' performance?

On what do you base your opinions about possible improvement in the graduates' performance as a result of participating in this project?

- How valuable was this whole 2003 experience for your own professional learning and that of the mentors?

Probe:

What aspects of the project contributed most strongly to your professional learning?

Were you able to make connections between this project and other professional learning experiences, e.g. specific professional development?

- How do/did you feel about the workload involved for yourself, the mentor(s) and the graduate(s)?

Probe:

What kinds of support were provided by yourself and the school administration to support the mentoring and assessment processes? Were these very time consuming?

Do you think the extra work involved was 'worth it' from a whole school point of view? In what ways?

- How were the induction/mentoring experiences of 2003 different from those of other years?

Probe:

What were the purposes/structure/content of previous induction/mentoring programs?

How was this different in terms of purpose/structure and content?

- How were the classroom observations carried out in this school?

Probe:

What is the school 'culture' in relation to teachers allowing other teachers, including senior and principal class staff, to enter their classrooms?

Did you observe the graduates' teaching at any stage?

Did mentors provide feedback to the graduate(s) in relation to classroom observations?

How helpful was this?

- How were the panel processes for the final assessment set up?

Probe:

How was the panel composition decided?

To what extent did you refer to/use the standards as part of the panel processes for assessing the graduate(s)?

Could you describe your own experiences of the panel processes?

Were you satisfied that the panel had sufficient evidence to make their judgements?

Were the processes fair?