



Internships

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An internship is an advanced professional experience within a preservice teacher education program following completion of the required minimum number of days of supervised professional experience (80 days for undergraduate programs; 55 for graduate programs). An internship provides a transition into the teaching profession through a reduced workload and the support of a mentor. The QTU currently maintains Internship Agreements with all Queensland universities that deliver teacher education courses. In the Agreement there is a clear role statement for all stakeholders.

These agreements may be found on the QTU website.

QTU Position:

The internship should occur in the final year of the preservice course and be of 4 – 6 weeks' duration.

The internship should:

- be distinct from supervised teaching practice with mentor teacher and associate teacher assuming different roles; e.g. **the mentor teacher does not assess the intern.**
- be totally voluntary on the part of teachers and schools
- provide for the student teacher the opportunity to prepare, undertake and evaluate a specified teaching assignment and to participate in general school life.

Provision should be made for schools to have the opportunity to require withdrawal of an intern who is experiencing significant difficulty.

Key Points:

(a) Interns

- Class contact time should be up to 50% with the remainder of the time being used for preparation and evaluation, consultation with a mentor teacher, and participation in school activities.

- The intern should be assisted by an experienced mentor teacher in collaboration with a university adviser.
- Assessment of the intern is the responsibility of the university.
- No unrelated assessment tasks should be required by the university during the internship.
- **Interns are not to be used as supply teachers in the absence of teachers.**

(b) Mentor Teachers

- Mentor teachers are entitled to 50% release time while the associate teacher is responsible for the teacher's class.
- **Mentor teachers cannot be used for substitute teaching in the release time while an intern is responsible for teaching their classes.**
- Mentor teachers retain accountability for the oversight and management of their classes' curriculum, co-curriculum and assessment and reporting programs but not for direct supervision of the associate teacher.
- Universities should provide appropriate training for voluntary participating teachers in the mentor role in the internship program.
- A copy of the agreement must be supplied to all parties to the agreement and to all teachers and students participating in the internship before its commencement.

Further References:

Internship agreements on QTU website: See 'Advice and Info'

QTU Professional Development Policy, 2.3.3

Multiple Faces of Internships (BTR publication, 2004)