Reconceptualising Mentoring Using Triads in Pre-service Teacher Education Professional Placements

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A dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the award of

Doctor of Education

Central Queensland University
Faculty of Arts, Business, Informatics and Education

April 2012
Declaration

I declare that the work presented in this dissertation is, to the best of my knowledge and belief, original except as acknowledged in the text, and that the material has not been submitted, either in whole or in part, for a degree at this or any other university.

The submission of this dissertation is in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the Doctor of Education at Central Queensland University.

Angelina Johanna Ambrosetti

Noosa, Queensland, Australia

April 2012.
Abstract

There is a growing body of research about the use of mentoring in the pre-service teacher education context. This research focuses specifically on the pre-service teacher during professional placement. This research investigates the pre-service teacher’s role as well as the mentor teacher’s role in mentoring relationships during their professional placements. It also investigates the use of peer mentors within a mentoring triad model. In the research, the mentoring triad consists of a mentor teacher, a first year pre-service teacher and a final year pre-service teacher.

A two-phased mixed method research design has been used. In Phase 1, an online survey was used to explore first and final year pre-service teachers perceptions of mentoring, mentor and peer mentoring roles. In Phase2, mentoring triads were explored using observation of triads in action and interviews.

Analysis of the data from both phases revealed that the perceptions of pre-service teachers concerning mentoring were similar in both first year and final year pre-service teachers. As well the nature and level of mentoring required by pre-service teachers tended to be specific to each cohort and was dependent upon the pre-service teacher’s developmental needs. The data also revealed that the role of the mentor is neither well understood by the pre-service teachers nor by the mentor teachers. Further it was found that the use of a mentoring triad extends the scope of mentor support that can be provided to the pre-service teacher. This approach to mentoring was deemed consistent with the functioning of a community of practice, and hence its use has considerable potential for further development as a mentoring practice.

The results from this research were used to develop a set of recommendations for pre-service teachers, mentor teachers and university academics to enhance the mentoring experiences during the professional placement.
Acknowledgements

I wish to acknowledge the guidance, support and advice provided by my research supervisors, Professor John Dekkers and Professor Bruce Knight.

I am especially grateful to Professor John Dekkers who mentored me throughout my journey. Many times the journey felt like an expedition into a strange new world with many twists and turns and starts and stops. Without Professor Dekkers’ unshakable belief in my abilities, his expert knowledge, friendship and encouragement, I doubt I would have reached my destination having enjoyed the trip; he made the rough road smooth. I am also grateful to Professor Bruce Knight who has been a critical friend to me, and has provided feedback and advice at crucial stages throughout.

There are a number of other acknowledgements I want to make. I would like to acknowledge the participants in my research. Firstly the triad participants, who graciously opened their classrooms to me; and secondly, the first year and final year pre-service teachers who took the time to complete the online survey.

I would like to thank my Dean of School who offered her encouragement at every chance, and assured me that my research would make an important contribution to our knowledge base. I would also like to acknowledge Dr Benjamin Seah who assisted me with the data analysis and helped to demystify the weird world of statistics. I would also like to acknowledge Denise Beckinsale, who did a wonderful job with the final edit of my dissertation.

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<td>Bachelor of Learning Management</td>
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<td>EPL</td>
<td>Embedded Professional Learning</td>
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<td>LLM</td>
<td>Lead Learning Manager</td>
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<tr>
<td>PST</td>
<td>Pre-service Teacher</td>
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<tr>
<td>TSM</td>
<td>Teaching School Model</td>
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<td>TSC</td>
<td>Teaching School Coordinator</td>
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Chapter 1
Dissertation Introduction

1.1 Introduction

Mentoring is a worldwide phenomenon. It is used in many different contexts and in a wide variety of professional fields as represented by the following research: Eby, Rhodes & Allen, (2007), Lucas (2001) and Scalon, (2008). Mentoring occurs in social groups; it exists in major corporations and is used within communities. Mentoring is viewed as a strategy to induct new professionals, retain existing staff, advance career prospects and encourage professional and personal development (Greene & Puetzer, 2002; Jewell, 2007; Le Maistre, Boudreau & Pare, 2006).

Formal research into mentoring emerged in the mid 1970s with much of the research concerning workplace mentoring (Jones & Brown, 2011). Mentoring research in educational contexts surfaced in the 1980s with exploration specifically examining the mentoring of beginning teachers (Little, 1990). In pre-service teacher education, mentoring has recently gained prominence and in many cases has replaced a supervisory type of model in the professional placement (Aladejana, Aladejana & Ehindero, 2006; Hudson & Millwater, 2008; Koc, 2011; Price & Chen, 2003; Walkington, 2005a). Mentoring in the pre-service teacher context centres on a classroom based teacher mentoring a pre-service teacher in their development of teaching skills within the authentic setting of a classroom (Ambrosetti, 2010; Graves, 2010). However, different forms of mentoring experiences in pre-service teacher education are emerging in the research literature. The traditional mentoring dyad where an experienced teacher mentors a pre-service teacher is still the most common form of mentoring; however relationships are being experimented with where more than one pre-service teacher is placed with a single mentor teacher (Bullough, Young, Erickson, Birrell, Clark, Egan, Berrie, Hales & Smith, 2002; Goodnough, Osmond, Dibbon, Glassman & Stevens, 2009; Huizing, 2012; Samimi-Duncan, Duncan & Lancaster, 2010).

The changing social context of our world has seen mentoring evolve since groundbreaking research about mentoring in the workplace was conducted by Kram in the early 1980s
(Bearman, Blake-Beard, Hunt & Crosby, 2007). As mentoring is a relatively recent strategy used in pre-service teacher education, the conceptualisation of mentoring has evolved in the past few years (Hall, Draper, Smith & Bullough, 2008; Hudson, 2004; Koc, 2011; Lai, 2005; Walkington, 2005b) despite the fact that limited research has been conducted on the nature of mentoring in the pre-service teacher context. The mentoring experiences that pre-service teachers encounter are directly related to their professional placement and their mentor teachers. In an environment where mentoring and supervision are intertwined, a lack of confidence on the part of the mentor teachers about how to provide worthwhile experiences for the pre-service teacher will remain if mentoring is not defined nor a process of mentoring provided (Hudson, 2004; Walkington, 2005b). This research concerns the reconceptualisation of mentoring in pre-service teaching. Specifically, it focuses on mentoring relationships and interactions between mentor teachers and pre-service teachers during professional experience placements. This research also investigates the perceptions and experiences of pre-service teachers concerning mentoring. Furthermore, in order to reconceptualise mentoring, the research investigates the use of alternative models of mentoring in pre-service teacher education such as mentoring triads and peer mentors.

This chapter introduces the research investigation and provides background to the topic. It provides background information regarding mentoring and outlines the context of the study. The research questions and the aims and objectives of the research are also provided. Specific terminology used in this research is defined and an overview of the content of the chapters is then presented.

1.2 Mentoring background and topic genesis

1.2.1 Situating Mentoring

Mentoring tends to be viewed as the pairing of an experienced person with an inexperienced one in order to guide, encourage and advise. This portrayal aligns with how mentoring is often described in the literature (Brennan, 2003; Fowler & O’Gorman, 2005; Huizing, 2012; Kram, 1985). Although mentoring is also described as being ‘complex’ (Fairbanks, Freedman & Kahn, 2000; Hall et al., 2008; Heirdsfield, Walker, Walsh & Wilss, 2008; Lucas, 2001; Tillema, Smith & Leshem, 2011), the representation of mentoring in the literature often creates a simplified view of what it entails. The seminal research undertaken by Kram (1984) into mentoring in the workplace provides more specific
description about the nature of mentoring and its use. Kram (1984) identified four facets of mentoring which are as follows.

- Mentoring is a relationship which is developmental.
- Mentoring is either a mutually enhancing relationship or a destructive relationship.
- The context affects the mentoring relationship.
- The needs of the mentor and mentees affect the relationship.

Kram’s facets of mentoring provide a foundation for situating mentoring in the twenty-first century. For instance, in an analysis of mentoring literature by Eby, Rhodes and Allen (2007) five attributes of mentoring were identified which they argue are common to all true mentoring relationships. The attributes identified by Eby et al. (2007) can be seen as an expansion on Kram’s earlier work.

- Mentoring reflects a unique relationship between individuals.
- Mentoring is a learning partnership.
- Mentoring is a process, defined by different types of support provided by the mentor to the protégé.
- A mentoring relationship is reciprocal, yet asymmetrical.
- Mentoring relationships are dynamic; the relationship changes over time.

Eby, Rhodes and Allen (2007, p.10)

Mentoring, according to Eby et al. (2007) and Kwan and Lopez-Real (2005), usually occurs through a purpose or need and follows a process. Training, retention, development of skills and support mechanisms are common purposes for mentoring (Graves, 2010; Jewell, 2007; Paris, 2010; Scalon, 2008). This research concerns mentoring in a pre-service teaching context where the relationship has been specifically formed for the purpose of learning how to teach. Chapter 2 provides an in-depth review of the mentoring research and literature. Mentoring is defined, mentoring models are examined and mentor and mentee roles are explored.

1.2.2 Topic Identification

As noted earlier, mentoring in a teacher education context occurs during the professional experience component of a pre-service teaching degree. It is during the professional placement that pre-service teachers are placed with classroom based teachers who assist
the neophytes’ development towards becoming equipped professionals. The professional experience as described by Walkington (2004, p.1) “is an opportunity for pre-service teachers to engage in a developmental process of observing and experimenting with teaching practice, and learning about the skills, knowledge, philosophies and attitudes of the professional teacher”. The professional placement is considered a “critical component” of pre-service teacher education programs throughout Australia (House of Representatives, 2007, p.67).

The time spent in schools and in classrooms is reported to be a part of a teaching degree that pre-service teaching students value highly and find most useful as it allows them to practise teach in an authentic setting (Ambrosetti, 2011; Brandenburg & Ryan, 2001; Brett, 2006; Graves, 2011; House of Representatives, 2007; Walkington, 2005a;). Despite this, the experiences of pre-service teachers during their professional placements vary greatly. This may be attributed to the varying interpretations of the nature of mentoring and how it occurs in the pre-service teacher context (Ambrosetti & Dekkers, 2010). However other variables such as personality and power struggles between the mentor and mentee may also be attributed to the variance of experiences.

This researcher’s own experiences provided tentative evidence of how this variance occurs. The personal experience of the researcher as a mentor teacher was that of unsureness of how to mentor a pre-service teacher. Although guidelines were provided for mentor teachers mentoring a pre-service teacher, there was no guidance about the nature of mentoring nor the process of mentoring. Now as a university lecturer and a coordinator of a professional placement program there is still no change in regards to the guidelines for the pre-service teachers during their professional placement. Working closely with mentor teachers it is evident that teachers who are mentoring pre-service teachers want to know how to mentor and want confirmation that what they are doing with the pre-service teacher is ‘right’.

The foregoing presented a reason for researching mentoring and in particular to explore alternative approaches to the current practices. In this respect, this researcher found that on occasions some mentor teachers were requesting to mentor more than one pre-service teacher and were using different approaches themselves to mentoring. Such a mentoring setting can be referred to as a mentoring triad in the literature (Bullough & Draper, 2004).
This research centres on the use of mentoring triads as a way of reconceptualising mentoring and this researcher identified this theme of mentoring research as an important area to investigate for two interrelated reasons.

- A need to consider alternatives to the present dyad mentoring approach.
- Recent research has demonstrated the potential of using peer and group mentoring in the pre-service teacher education context.

Regarding the latter research the adoption of elements of communities of practice (CoPs) and learning communities (LCs) have shown the potential to facilitate the possibilities of the mentoring process as considered in Chapter 2. Research which concerns the use of communities of practice and learning communities in an educational context suggest that there is a benefit to existing mentoring practices (Blair, 2008; Dinsmore & Wenger, 2006; Le Cornu, 2010).

1.2.3 Research Context

This research is situated in the context of the Bachelor of Learning Management (BLM) program. This program is a four year teaching degree accredited by the Queensland College of Teachers. The remainder of this section provides an overview of the BLM program and its nuances.

**The Bachelor of Learning Management**

The Bachelor of Learning Management replaced the Bachelor of Education in 2001 at CQUniversity in response to a changing education environment in Queensland. Queensland State Education 2010: A future strategy (Education Queensland, 2000), was a key document which heralded the need for a different type of teacher. With this in mind, the developers of the BLM (Smith & Lynch, 2006, p.1) intended that the program prepare a “different type of teacher, rather than a ‘better’ teacher”, one who could manage in a world with changing societal values, technology and work conditions. They argue that teachers in such a changing world need an “advanced capacity to design and implement successful pedagogical strategies” (Smith & Lynch, 2006, p.4). The developers addressed this need by underpinning the program with the construct of learning management.

Learning management is a term distinctively used by the BLM and in the context of pre-service teacher education refers to the capability to design pedagogical strategies which
achieve intended outcomes for learners (Smith and Lynch, 2010). Such a capacity was intended to be developed by BLM pre-service teachers through an increase in time spent in schools and specific instruction on pedagogical practice.

The program’s focus on pedagogical practice is strongly emphasised within the professional placement or practicum. The professional placement is structured so that pre-service teachers engage in presumably meaningful assessable tasks during their time in schools through the use of ‘portal tasks’ (see Table 1.1). Pre-service teachers receive specific instruction about the ‘learning design process’ (see Table 1.1) and research based pedagogical strategies, which are then used to design and implement learning experiences during the professional placement.

Apart from having differing theoretical underpinnings from the traditional pre-service program, the terminology which is used within the degree differs from more traditional education terms. Table 1.1 provides a glossary of terms used within the BLM program.
Table 1.1 Glossary of terms used in the BLM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tr>
<td>Embedded Professional Learning (EPL)</td>
<td>The placement of a pre-service teacher in a school or other learning sites for the purpose of practical experience.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Learning manager</td>
<td>This term replaced “teacher” in the original BLM lexicon. This change was used to indicate the learning manager had a different skill set from that of a teacher. Learning managers are referred to as pre-service teachers within this dissertation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lead Learning Manager</td>
<td>The LLM is a school staff member who manages the operation of the teaching school. The LLM liaises with the Teaching School Coordinator (TSC) and coordinates and supervises the EPL experience for the EPL placements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning design process</td>
<td>The learning design process is a planning framework which uses the 8 Learning Management questions and Dimensions of Learning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentor teacher</td>
<td>The teacher in whose class the BLM pre-service teacher works while in the teaching school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portal Task</td>
<td>A specified task undertaken by the pre-service teacher during their professional placement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching school</td>
<td>A designated school in which a partnership has been established with.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching School Coordinator (TSC)</td>
<td>A university academic who coordinates the EPL experience at a particular level of the pre-service program. The TSC works with each LLM at each teaching school to support both the mentor teachers and learning managers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching School Model (TSM)</td>
<td>An approach to delivering the professional practice components of the BLM program to pre-service teachers. A “teaching school” is a school in which the BLM program places pre-service teachers for their professional practice.</td>
</tr>
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Although the BLM program is a four year degree, students enrolled have the option of a three year fast track pathway. This pathway enables pre-service teachers to undertake an increased workload and graduate in three years rather than the traditional four years. Therefore within the BLM program, students in their final professional placements are referred to as ‘final years’ rather than third or fourth year pre-service teachers.

The Teaching School Model

The Teaching School Model (TSM) provides the real life setting for a pre-service teacher to practise their skills and be guided by a qualified mentor teacher. According to the Embedded Professional Learning Handbook, “The Teaching School Model provides the framework for the conduct of and participation in a professional placement (EPL). This model comprises a partnership between the university and the school’s teaching professionals which shapes the roles and responsibilities of all key personnel”
Turner (2006 and 2011) recounts that the Teaching School Model had its genesis in the medical professional, in particular the teaching hospital. The teaching hospital plays a key role in the training of medical professionals such as doctors and nurses through the application of knowledge and skills under the supervision of qualified mentors. As such, the following are key features of the Teaching School Model.

- Pre-service teachers are attached to schools in cohorts so as to establish a community of practice.

- Pre-service teachers are attached to a teaching school for a minimum of two university terms. The placement consists of day visits and a block period. This structure provides the pre-service teachers with the opportunity to become immersed in the routines of the classroom, to get to know the mentor and the learners, and build towards taking on more of the classroom teacher’s role before commencing the continuous block.

- Relationships and partnerships are established between the university and schools so that both parties benefit. Benefits for the school may include professional development opportunities for school staff offered by the university, as well as the pre-service teachers themselves who ideally add capability to the school.

- University support is provided to the teaching school through training and financial compensation to the Lead Learning Manager (LLM). A Teaching Schools Coordinator also provides support to the school, LLM, mentor teachers and pre-service teachers during the placement.

- Assessment through a portal task is specifically linked to on-campus content.

- Professional practice and professional knowledge are explicitly interlinked. Pre-service teachers practise the pedagogical strategies learnt in university courses in an authentic setting.

The management and operation of the TSM centres around three key personnel namely the mentor teacher, a Lead Learning Manager and a Teaching Schools Coordinator. The responsibilities of the individuals is summarised in Table 1.2. Also included in Table 1.2 are the responsibilities of the pre-service teacher. The Teaching Schools Coordinator, as the university academic, oversees the operation and management of the model.
**Table 1.2 Responsibilities of key personnel in the Teaching School Model**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Responsibilities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mentor Teacher (MT)</strong></td>
<td>• Provide opportunities for the PST to observe teaching in action&lt;br&gt;• Assist the PST with their preparation for learning experiences&lt;br&gt;• Be present at all times when a PST is “teaching” their class&lt;br&gt;• Provide verbal and written feedback to the PST that indicates present strengths as well as areas for development&lt;br&gt;• Assess the demonstration of expectations for teaching, planning and reflecting appropriate to the PST’s level of experience&lt;br&gt;• Complete the information and reporting documents with a recommended grade and return to the LLM for collection and signing by the PST</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lead Learning Manager (LLM)</strong></td>
<td>• Placement of the PST with an appropriate Mentor Teacher/s&lt;br&gt;• Arrange learning management sessions with the PSTs as a group on issues such as the policies and procedures relevant to the teaching school and placement issues&lt;br&gt;• Keep a “close professional eye” on the PSTs in their care including offering advice to both PSTs and Mentor Teachers&lt;br&gt;• Notify the Teaching School Coordinator immediately if there are any concerns about a PST’s progress or professional conduct&lt;br&gt;• Return completed and signed information and reporting documents to the university</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teaching School Coordinator (TSC)</strong></td>
<td>• Facilitate the EPL program&lt;br&gt;• Allocate pre-service teachers to a teaching school&lt;br&gt;• Maintain contact with the LLM and monitor the PSTs progress&lt;br&gt;• Provide professional learning for LLMs and Mentor Teachers, in particular, induction sessions and information sessions regarding the EPL experiences.&lt;br&gt;• Respond to requests for support or advice by LLMs or mentor teachers&lt;br&gt;• Mediate the ‘At Risk’ procedure&lt;br&gt;• Communicate all expectations for the EPL placement to the PSTs&lt;br&gt;• Prepare the PSTs for EPL through the delivery of university-based tutorials.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pre-service Teacher (PST)</strong></td>
<td>• Observe the rules and professional expectations of staff members at the teaching school (as communicated by the LLM or MT).&lt;br&gt;• Read relevant school policy documents and adopt teaching, learning and management practices consistent with these.&lt;br&gt;• Undertake all tasks as outlined in the relevant Information and Reporting Package.&lt;br&gt;• Keep an up-to-date and organised working portfolio during EPL.&lt;br&gt;• Present the working portfolio to the MT each EPL day.&lt;br&gt;• Sight and sign the record of progress daily.&lt;br&gt;• Sight and sign all assessment forms in the Information and Reporting Package on completion of each EPL.&lt;br&gt;• Attend staff meetings and/or LLM sessions.&lt;br&gt;• Present the day’s preparation to the MT at a mutually agreed time before school each morning. In the case of continuous teaching, PSTs present their planning for the ensuing week to the MT each Monday morning.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table adapted from Embedded Professional Learning Handbook (2010)
**Embedded Professional Learning**

The professional placement in the BLM degree is referred to as Embedded Professional Learning (EPL). Embedded Professional Learning consists of a series of five placements which are distributed over three years of the degree program, with the final three EPL placements undertaken in the final year of the degree. Pre-service teachers enrolled in an education degree at CQUniversity have a professional placement in the first semester of study. The total number of days spent undertaking a professional placement equals 160 days over the course of the BLM program. The number of placement days is double of that required by the Queensland teacher registration and program approval authority, the Queensland College of Teachers. As noted in the previous section the professional placement consists of single day visits which culminate in a continuous block. This format of professional placement occurs throughout the degree as shown in Table 1.3.

**Table 1.3 Pre-service teacher’s professional placement schedule**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program year</th>
<th>Semester 1</th>
<th>Semester 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>First year – EPL 1</strong></td>
<td>10 single day visits</td>
<td>10 single day visits + two week block</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Second year – EPL 2</strong></td>
<td>10 single day visits + two week block</td>
<td>10 single day visits + three week block</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Final year – EPL 3, 4 and 5</strong></td>
<td>Two week block + 10 single day visits + three week block</td>
<td>Four week block + six week internship</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Information and reporting guidelines are provided to pre-service teachers, mentor teachers and the lead learning manager (LLM) at each teaching school for each EPL experience. The guidelines provide details of the portal tasks the pre-service teachers are required to complete, as well as other general tasks to be undertaken during the EPL placement. The preparation of the pre-service teacher for their EPL experience occurs before the placement begins and continues throughout the day visits. Pre-service teachers attend a series of lectures which creates familiarity with tasks, makes links to specific pedagogical strategies, and provides support with learning experience design and curriculum planning. Lead Learning Managers are provided with professional development concerning the EPL requirements. In turn, LLMs provide mentor teachers with information regarding the EPL requirements.
1.3 Research aims, research questions and objectives

1.3.1 Research Aims

The aim of this research is to investigate the reconceptualisation of mentoring in the context of professional placements in pre-service teacher education programs. Specifically, the aims of the research are to:

- Examine perceptions of first year and final year pre-service teachers concerning the mentoring, mentoring relationships, mentoring roles and the role of peer mentors.

- Investigate the experiences of first year and final year pre-service teachers concerning the mentoring, mentoring relationships, mentoring roles and the role of peer mentors during the Embedded Professional Learning.

- Explore the interactions within mentoring triads between mentors and mentees within the pre-service teacher context.

1.3.2 Research Questions

The following research questions (RQ) will guide the investigation.

**RQ1 What are the perceptions of pre-service teachers about mentoring?**

RQ1.1 What are their perceptions of mentoring?

RQ1.2 What are their perceptions of mentoring relationships?

RQ1.3 What are their perceptions of mentor and mentee roles?

RQ1.4 What are their perceptions of peer mentors?

**RQ2 What mentoring experiences do pre-service teachers encounter during their professional placements?**

RQ2.1 What mentoring experiences occur?

RQ2.2 What mentoring relationships occur?

RQ2.3 What are the roles of mentors and mentees?

RQ2.4 What are the roles of peer mentors?

**RQ3 In the context of a mentoring triad, what are the roles of each of the participants and what interactions occur between the participants?**

RQ3.1 What types of interactions occur between mentor teachers and the pre-service teachers in a mentoring relationship and how do they occur?

RQ3.2 What types of interactions occur between the two pre-service teachers?
RQ3.3 What are the roles of each participant in the mentoring relationship?
RQ3.4 What are the roles of peer mentors within the mentoring triad?
RQ3.5 How do peers and mentors collectively further enhance the potential of the mentoring process for the mentee?

1.3.3 Research Objectives
The following research objectives are being used to address the research questions.

Objective 1
To utilise a mixed methodology approach to explore the perceptions and experiences of first year and final year pre-service teachers about mentoring during their Embedded Professional Learning (RQs 1 and 2).

Objective 2
To explore triads in action through observations and interviews. (RQ3)

1.4 Definitions and terms
A number of terms and definitions are used in this dissertation that are not commonly used elsewhere. Also a number of the terms employed have different usage in common language. In order to avoid ambiguity, a number of terms are explained and definitions provided and definitions often used in this dissertation.

Community of Practice is a group of people who share an interest in or concern for something in which they mutually engage. Regular interactions provide opportunities to learn how to develop and improve (Wenger, 2006).

Embedded Professional Learning (EPL) refers to the professional placement that pre-service teachers undertake in the Bachelor of Learning Management for the purpose of practical experience. EPL consists of a series of day visits and blocks of time.

In-service Teacher is a term used to describe a teacher who has graduated from a four year teaching degree and is currently teaching.

Interaction in this dissertation is a reciprocal action, effect or influence that can be verbal or non verbal undertaken by two or more people.
Learning Community is a group of people whose common goal is to create a vibrant, participative and affirming learning environment. This is achieved through active promotion of learning opportunities that enhance the potential of all of its members (Longworth, 1999).

Learning Management is a term exclusively used in the BLM. Learning management is the capacity of a person to design pedagogical strategies that achieve intended outcomes for learners. The construct of learning management underpins the philosophy of the Bachelor of Learning Management.

Mentee in this dissertation is a pre-service teacher undertaking a professional placement.

Mentor (Mentor Teacher) in this dissertation is the more experienced participant in the mentoring relationship. The mentor can be the classroom teacher or a more experienced peer.

Mentoring is a non-hierarchical, reciprocal relationship between mentors and mentees that works towards specific professional and personal outcomes for the mentee. The relationship usually follows a developmental pattern within a specified timeframe and roles are defined, expectations are outlined and a purpose is clearly delineated. This definition has been developed for the purpose of this research (Ambrosetti & Dekkers, 2010, p.52).

Mentoring Dyad is a traditional mentoring relationship where there are two participants. Within the pre-service teacher context a mentoring dyad consists of a classroom based teacher as the mentor and a pre-service teacher as the mentee. Typically, the mentor is older and more experienced while the mentee is younger and has less experience.

Practicum in this dissertation is referred to as Embedded Professional Learning (EPL).

Pre-service Teacher is a Bachelor of Learning Management student participating in an EPL.
Professional placement is an activity undertaken in a classroom/school in which the pre-service teachers are provided with the opportunity to ‘practise teach’.

Supervising Teacher (or supervisor) is the classroom teacher hosting a pre-service teacher. A supervising teacher directs and assesses pre-service teacher, rather than supports and guides them.

Mentoring Triad is a mentoring group which consists of two pre-service teachers and a mentor teacher. Specifically in this dissertation, the mentoring triad consists of a first year pre-service teacher, a final year pre-service teacher and a mentor teacher.

Teacher Education Program is program in which pre-service teachers enrol in order to obtain a teacher qualification.

1.5 Organisation of the dissertation

Chapter 1 – Introduction
This forgoing introduction has defined the research topic by presenting the aims of the research, the research questions and objectives of the study. This chapter also presented the contextual background in which the research study takes place.

Chapter 2 – Literature Review
This chapter presents a review of the mentoring literature intended to inform the research. The review defines mentoring, examines models of mentoring and considers the roles of mentors and mentees. The chapter concludes by identifying research gaps and their implications for the dissertation.

Chapter 3 – Methodology
This chapter details the research methodology that was used to examine the research questions. The research design is presented, the data collection instruments are introduced, and the research ethics are established.
Chapter 4 – Design and Development of Data Collection
This chapter presents the design and development of the three data collection instruments utilised in the research, namely the online survey, observation protocol and interview schedule.

Chapter 5 – Online Survey Results – Phase 1
This chapter presents the results of the online survey. As such, the Phase 1 results concern the perceptions and experiences of pre-service teachers regarding mentoring.

Chapter 6 – Observation and Interview Results – Phase 2
The chapter presents the results from Phase 2 of the research which concerns the observations of the mentoring triads in action and interviews with each triad member.

Chapter 7 – Discussion of Results
This chapter presents a discussion of the results of the research in terms of the research questions.

Chapter 8 – Conclusion
The chapter draws together the findings of the research study and presents recommendations for mentoring in pre-service teacher education programs. This chapter also highlights areas for further research.
Chapter 2
Mentoring in the Professions and Teacher Education
Contexts

2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a review of the mentoring literature. It examines the nature of mentoring and the use and characteristics of mentoring. The chapter also contextualises the use of mentoring in pre-service teacher education by examining the roles of mentors and mentees in this context. The concluding section examines the notion of communities of practice and how these may benefit mentoring practices in the pre-service teacher education context.

A preliminary review of the literature indicates that there is a plethora of literature; both research based and non research based. Due to the plethora of literature which concerns mentoring, this review utilises literature which is drawn mainly from publications not older than ten years. This approach has been adopted due to a significant number of research projects which involve the examination of mentoring in the new millennium. It is also due to the changing context in which mentoring is being used. As such, according to Bearman, Blake-Beard, Hunt & Crosby (2007), the changing social context of our world has meant that mentoring has evolved and has been transformed since groundbreaking research conducted by seminal researcher Kram (1984) in the eighties. The review has drawn upon mentoring literature from an array of disciplines which includes the pre-service teacher context in order to deconstruct mentoring. The range of literature drawn upon includes:

- Journal articles such as ‘Mentoring and Tutoring’, ‘Asia-Pacific Teacher Education Journal’, ‘Teaching and Teacher Education’ and ‘The International Journal of Evidence Based Coaching and Mentoring’.
- Conference papers and proceedings such as the Australian Association for Research in Education.
- Seminal work such as Kram’s ‘Mentoring at work: Developmental relationships at work’.
- Published dissertations
The specific purposes of this literature review are as follows:

- Review the literature in order to highlight current research undertaken in mentoring.
- Establish a working definition of mentoring for use in a teacher education context. The definition is intended to provide guidance about the nature of mentoring, use and characteristics of mentoring.
- Investigate different models of mentoring in order to determine the nature and approach to mentoring in different contexts.
- Identify theory and practice as a foundation for this research.

2.2 Mentoring

This section of the literature examines the concept of mentoring. It defines mentoring, examines mentoring relationships and explores the advantages and disadvantages of mentoring.

2.2.1 Defining mentoring

Jones and Brown (2011, p.401) state that “despite 40 years of research into mentoring the field lacks a widely accepted definition”. The mentoring literature supports this statement as a surplus of definitions is to be found. However Bearman et al., (2007) reason that mentoring will always be difficult to define as it is a social event which involves interactions between individuals, those being the mentor and mentee as considered in Section 2.6.3. Nevertheless for the purpose of this dissertation it was necessary to examine the types of definitions and descriptions which have been used to describe mentoring in order to obtain clarity about its nature and use.

Many of the definitions of mentoring suggest a hierarchical relationship where the mentor is more experienced than the mentee, or that the mentor has or can provide knowledge and skills that the mentee wants or needs (Aladejana, Aladejana & Ehindero, 2006; Billett, 2003; Fowler & O’Gorman, 2005; Hayes, 2001; Koc, 2011; McCormack & West, 2006; Price & Chen, 2003). However other definitions suggest a more reciprocal relationship (Ambrosetti & Dekkers, 2010; Hargreaves & Fullan, 2000; Heirdsfield et al., 2008; Le Cornu, 2010). Mentoring definitions also tend to reflect the context in which they occur. For instance Smith (2007, p.277) defines mentoring as “a particular mode of learning wherein the mentor not only supports the mentee, but also challenges them productively.
so that progress is made”. In the pre-service teacher context, mentoring, according to Fairbanks, Freedman and Kahn (2000, p.103) is made up of “complex social interactions that mentor teachers and student teachers’ construct and negotiate for a variety of professional purposes and in response to the contextual factors they encounter”.

Within the literature, the term mentoring has been intertwined and interchangeably used with terms such as supervising and coaching (Koc, 2011; Orly, 2008; Parker, Hall & Kram, 2008; Sundli, 2007). Table 2.1 compares the terms mentoring, supervising and coaching in terms of their goals and characteristics.

Table 2.1 Comparison of mentoring with supervising and coaching

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Goals</th>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>References</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Supervising</strong></td>
<td>An interpersonal relationship which provides the other with developmental guidance.</td>
<td>Teach specific roles of the job Performance of the job</td>
<td>Formal or informal relationship Non-hierarchical, reciprocal relationship Mentor is a role model who guides, directs, advises and provides feedback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Coaching</strong></td>
<td>A detached relationship which provides instruction to accomplish work related goals</td>
<td>Teach specific skill/s through a training routine Manage own capability and performance</td>
<td>Purposeful relationship which is usually formal Coach is an expert who observes, diagnoses, directs, monitors, teaches, encourages and assesses performance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2.1 shows that there are specific differences between the terms, mentoring, supervising and coaching. Bray and Nettleton (2007) discuss the differences between
mentoring and supervision in the healthcare industry. They indicate that supervising involves “the roles of teacher, boss, assessor, counsellor and expert”, whereas mentoring involves “assisting, befriending, guiding, advising and counselling” (Bray & Nettleton, 2007, p.849). Within the pre-service teacher education context, according to Walkington (2005b), supervision intends to mould the pre-service teacher to fit into the school/classroom environment through enculturation, feedback and assessment, whereas mentoring provides opportunities for pre-service teachers to develop their personal selves through reflective practices. The process of mentoring tends to occur over time whilst coaching is a moment in time process. Furthermore when coaching occurs, immediate feedback tends to be provided about a skill, technique or practice. This feedback tends to take the form of an “informal evaluation” and allows the person to put the feedback into practice (Bowman & McCormick, 2000, p. 256).

In contexts such as pre-service teacher education the role of assessment of the pre-service teacher is a source of debate in the mentoring literature (for example Fransson, 2010; Jones, 2000; LeMaistre, Boudreau & Pare 2006; Tillema, Smith & Leshem, 2011; Walkington, 2005b). Mentoring definitions, as described in the previous sections, do not include assessment by the mentor. According to Walkington (2005b), assessment is associated with supervision as supervisors traditionally make a judgement on the novice’s performance. However in the pre-service teacher context, mentor teachers are required by the pre-service teaching program to assess and assign a grade to the pre-service teacher (Jones, 2000; Walkington, 2005b). Thus, Tillema et al. (2011) argue that mentors should use both formative and summative assessment whilst mentoring a pre-service teacher. However, according to Fransson (2010) and Tillema et al. (2011), a shared understanding of assessment practices and tools needs to be formulated by both the mentor and mentee so that misunderstandings are not inadvertently being had.

Chapter 1 presented a brief summary of Kram’s seminal research about mentoring. Kram’s research has provided a baseline for dissecting the conceptualisation of mentoring. In an analysis of mentoring in the teacher education context, Lai (2005) encapsulated three components in which to describe mentoring. The three components were identified as relational, developmental and contextual and they are described as follows.
• The relational component of mentoring concerns the nature of the relationship
between the participants and the roles each participant plays. The nature of the
relationship can be dependent on the purpose of the mentoring and may be either of
a personal or professional nature. According to Eby et al. (2007) and Tillema et al.
(2011), the mentor has specific roles to play within the relationship. Roles may be
emotionally based which offer support and friendship, or those that are career
related such as guidance and advocacy.

• The developmental component of mentoring centres on how the process of
development occurs. It has been determined in the literature that the capabilities
and needs of the mentee should shape the interactions that occur within the
relationship (Bearman et al. 2007; Cransborn et al. 2010; Schwille, 2008; Smith, 2007).
It follows, according to Lai (2005), that the functions and behaviours of the
relationship are what assist the mentee in achieving developmental goals.

• The contextual dimension of a mentoring relationship refers to the situation and
circumstance of where and how the mentoring relationship operates. The
contextual dimension also includes the concept of enculturation. Enculturation in
this context refers to the culture of a workplace and how the workers behave in the
workplace. The context, according to Cherin (2007), and Fairbanks et al. (2000) can
shape the nature and quality of the relationship.

According to Lai (2005), there has been a tendency for authors not to address each of the
above three components when describing mentoring. For example, the definitions by
Smith (2007) define mentoring as only a developmental process and Fairbanks et al. (2000)
define mentoring as a developmental and contextual event. This leads to consideration as
to whether mentoring achieves its ultimate potential when one or more of the components
are not identified. The three components provide a holistic perspective of mentoring;
however this consideration is not apparent in the mentoring literature. In light of the
differences between the terms mentoring, supervising and coaching, as shown in Table 2.1,
mentoring appears to be mentoring when particular characteristics are present. Based on
the foregoing, Figure 2.1 has conceptualised components of mentoring as identified by
Kram (1984) and Lai (2005). As such, the components of mentoring as shown in Figure
2.1 encapsulate a holistic approach to mentoring.
Further to this conceptualisation of mentoring, it is deemed necessary to have a definition of mentoring that provides consistency of meaning when referring to the process of mentoring in this research. Based on the forgoing, the working definition developed by the researcher includes relational, developmental and contextual aspects and has been generated as follows:

Mentoring is a non-hierarchical, reciprocal relationship between mentors and mentees who work towards specific professional and personal outcomes for the mentee. The relationship follows a developmental pattern within a specified timeframe where roles are defined, expectations are outlined and contextual factors are addressed. (Ambrosetti & Dekkers, 2010, p.52)

The working definition addresses each mentoring component as described earlier. It can be seen from the working definition that the relational aspect focuses on developing a shared relationship in which mentors and mentees work together. It can also be seen from the working definition that the relationship should work towards obtaining outcomes which can be translated into meeting developmental needs. The contextual aspect in this definition is addressed through the consideration of contextual factors.
2.2.2 Mentoring relationships

The previous section has defined mentoring with Figure 2.1 pinpointing the relationship as central to the nature of mentoring, therefore further exploration of the concept of a ‘mentoring relationship’ is needed. As such the exploration of mentoring relationships will inform the research to be undertaken.

Mentoring relationships can be further classified as formal or informal (Aladejana et al. 2004; Bally, 2007; Eby & Lockwood, 2005; Raabe & Beehr, 2003). According to Eby and Lockwood (2005), informal and formal mentoring differ through relationship initiation, structure, length and purpose. An informal mentoring relationship is often described as a ‘naturally occurring’ relationship which is initiated by either the mentor or mentee for a situational need determined by the mentee (Lentz & Allen, 2007). Cox (2005) and Lentz and Allen (2007) suggest that in these situations, the mentee often chooses a mentor who acts as a role model for them. The relationship in this sense operates on terms created by the mentee and mentor and continues for as long as it is needed. Informal mentor relationships often provide friendship, sponsorship and social engagement (Lentz & Allen, 2007). Formal mentoring relationships however usually arise from a structured program and have specific goals to achieve (Bally, 2007; Kwan & Lopez-Real, 2005). A formal mentoring relationship, according to Eby and Lockwood (2005) tends to be organised by a third party, is usually short term and act for a specific purpose which may be identified by another. This dissertation concerns the use of formal mentoring relationships. Eby and Lockwood (2005) also maintain that there is usually an effort to match the mentor and mentee, however within the pre-service teacher context, no research has been found to support this.

The mentoring literature tends to stereotype the relationship as involving a mentor who is an older, wiser, more experienced person, and a mentee, who is a younger, less experienced protégé type of person. However, the past 10 years or so has seen the emergence of a more contemporary view of who the mentors and the mentees are (Higgins & Kram, 2001; Jones & Brown, 2011; Kostovich & Thurn, 2006). The contemporary view of who a mentor can be challenges the idea that the mentor needs to be older or senior in status. According to Smith (2007), a mentor nowadays can be a co-worker or a peer, someone who is equal in status. The contemporary view of mentoring relationships involves the concept of reciprocity (Heirdsfield et al. 2008; Jones & Brown,
2011; Kamvounias, McGrath-Champ & Yip, 2007), where both the mentor and mentee make equally important contributions to the relationship, as well as each being able to make gains from the relationship (Heirdsfield et al. 2008; McGee, 2001; Mullen and Noe, 1999). Ambrosetti and Dekkers (2010) describe this as a mutual mentoring relationship where the roles of the mentor and mentee interconnect.

It can be seen from the mentoring literature that preparation for participation in a mentoring relationship should be a consideration for both formal and informal relationships. Although preparation for mentoring is well documented in the literature, it is generally discussed in terms of matching participants, time and training (Norman & Feiman-Nemser, 2005; Eby & Lockwood, 2005). Table 2.2 presents a summary of the aspects of mentoring preparation as identified in the literature.
Table 2.2 Aspects detailed in the literature for describing the preparation for mentoring

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mentoring preparation</th>
<th>References</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Roles of the mentor and mentee defined</strong>&lt;br&gt;Defining each participant’s role in the mentoring relationship enables each of the participants to fulfil their responsibilities and work towards achieving their goals.</td>
<td>• Heirdsfield et al. (2008)&lt;br&gt;• Koc (2011)&lt;br&gt;• Norman &amp; Feiman-Nemser (2005)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Participant expectations</strong>&lt;br&gt;Participants should clearly outline their expectations of the mentoring relationship in terms of what they hope to achieve from the relationship so that goals can be set and met.</td>
<td>• D’Abate &amp; Eddy (2008)&lt;br&gt;• Koc (2011)&lt;br&gt;• Kram (1985)&lt;br&gt;• McCormack &amp; West (2006)&lt;br&gt;• Rajuan, Beijaard &amp; Verloop (2007)&lt;br&gt;• Valeni &amp; Vogrinc (2007)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Induction and/or training</strong>&lt;br&gt;The participants in the mentoring relationship need preparation time at the beginning and/or during the relationship in order to meet each other, share goals and participate in training about mentoring.</td>
<td>• Heirdsfield et al. (2008)&lt;br&gt;• Hennissen, Crasborn, Brouwer, Korthagen &amp; Bergen (2011)&lt;br&gt;• Kram (1985)&lt;br&gt;• Terrion et al. (2007)&lt;br&gt;• Valeni &amp; Vogrinc (2007)&lt;br&gt;• Walkington (2005b)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Organised timeframe</strong>&lt;br&gt;An organised timeframe of the relationship needs to outline a timeline for the mentoring, when meetings are to occur and tasks are to be performed by the mentee.</td>
<td>• Eby &amp; Lockwood (2005)&lt;br&gt;• Glaser, Hall &amp; Halperin (2006)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>On going relationship evaluation</strong>&lt;br&gt;The mentoring relationship is evaluated by both the mentor and mentee in order to meet the goals of the relationship. This may occur through informal or formal means.</td>
<td>• Greene &amp; Puetzer (2002)&lt;br&gt;• Kram (1985)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Communication channels</strong>&lt;br&gt;Clear communication strategies are needed so that all participants know what communication means are to be used.</td>
<td>• Allen &amp; Poteet (1999)&lt;br&gt;• Heirdsfield et al. (2008)&lt;br&gt;• Walkington (2005a)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Participant matching</strong>&lt;br&gt;Mentors and mentees are matched according to gender, interests, ages, developmental levels, experiences and needs.</td>
<td>• Cox (2005)&lt;br&gt;• D’Abate &amp; Eddy (2008)&lt;br&gt;• Eby &amp; Lockwood (2005)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It can be seen from the table that the literature infers that training, communication strategies, defining responsibilities, identifying expectations and goals, outlining the timeframe and relationship evaluation should be considered in preparation for the mentoring relationship.

**2.2.3 Advantages and disadvantages of mentoring**

The literature indicates that more often than not, research which concerns mentoring are portrayed as a positive, beneficial event for all involved. However few research studies have explored the negative aspects or disadvantages of mentoring (Eby, McManus, Simon & Russell, 2000; Kram,1985; Sundli, 2007). This section documents both the advantages...
and disadvantages of mentoring for both the mentor and mentee as reported in the literature as shown in Tables 2.3 and 2.4.

Table 2.3 Advantages and disadvantages of mentoring for mentors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mentor advantages</th>
<th>Mentor disadvantages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Reflection on existing practice (Hennissen et al. 2011; McGee, 2001; Walkington, 2005a)</td>
<td>• An increased workload and time (Hamel, Jaasko-Fisher, 2011; Heirdsfield et al. 2008; Walkington, 2005b)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Improved work ethic (McGee, 2001; Walkington, 2005a)</td>
<td>• Uncertainty about the role of being mentor (Kostovich &amp; Thurn, 2006; Walkington, 2005b)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Being able to make a difference in another’s personal and professional life (Lai, 2005; Walkington, 2005b)</td>
<td>• Uncertainty about performing the task of mentoring (Kostovich &amp; Thurn, 2006; Walkington, 2005b)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Being able to develop as a professional (Heirdsfield et al. 2008; Jewell, 2007; Kostovich &amp; Thurn, 2006; McGee, 2001; Orly, 2008)</td>
<td>• Having to make a judgement or complete assessment about mentees performance, (Fransson, 2010; Laker, Laker &amp; Lea, 2008; Tillema et al. 2011)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Renewed enthusiasm for the job (Walkington, 2005b)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Enhanced collegiality (Kostovich &amp; Thurn, 2006; McGee, 2001)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It can be seen from Table 2.3 that the advantages listed tend to focus upon the mentor becoming ‘better’ or ‘improved’ at their job, whereas the disadvantages for the mentor tend to concern workload and professional issues.

Table 2.4 Advantages and disadvantages of mentoring for mentees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mentee advantages</th>
<th>Mentee disadvantages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Observing specific professional skills (Lai, 2005; Rajuan et al. 2008)</td>
<td>• Hierarchical issues – knowing that the mentor was making a judgement or assessing the performance (Laker, Laker &amp; Lea, 2008; Maynard, 2000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Sharing of professional experiences and receiving practical advice about these (Lai, 2005)</td>
<td>• Meeting expectations – both realistic and unrealistic (Rajuan et al. 2008)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Receiving constructive feedback about their professional progress (Lai, 2005)</td>
<td>• Being caught in a non-productive relationship (Eby et al. 2000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Developing reflective practices (Lai, 2005; Walkington, 2005a)</td>
<td>• Philosophical differences about the job or profession (Rajuan et al. 2008)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2.4 indicates that the advantages for mentees concern developmental aspects, as well as the use of mentoring as a learning tool. Disadvantages for the mentee centre on negative aspects that may emerge between the mentor and mentee. However, advantages
and disadvantages for mentees who participate in a mentoring relationship appear not to have been extensively considered in the research.

2.3 Models of mentoring

As this research explores the use of an alternative model of mentoring, it is appropriate to examine existing mentoring models. Along with the traditional dyad model, mentoring which involves groups, peers and triads are examined.

2.3.1 Dyads in mentoring

Dyads as a mentoring model is recognised as the traditional mentoring model and involve two people, one who is experienced and one who is less experienced. These one to one relationships are referred to in the current literature as mentoring dyads. Jones and Brown (2011) identify two types of mentoring dyads, those which are based on traditional hierarchal ‘top down’ models and those which are based on reciprocal approaches. Mentoring dyads can be formal or informal and are either created by a third party or by the mentor and mentee themselves (Lentz & Allen, 2007). According to Allen and Eby (2007) mentoring dyads are seen as ‘units’ and share a sense of belonging. The authors refer to this as a ‘communal relationship’ where “members feel a responsibility for meeting the needs of their relationship partners and in which the benefits provided to partners are not based on contingencies” (Allen & Eby, 2007, p.410). However difficulties can arise for both the mentor and mentee in a traditional dyad. According to Eby et al. (2000), personality clashes, incompetence, threatening or distancing behaviour and positional power are causes of negative experiences.

2.3.2 Peer mentoring

Peer mentoring is an approach to mentoring that makes use of a peer/s who share the same job or study, or is part of the same organisation and is similar in age and experience (Parker, Hall & Kram, 2008; Terrion, Philion & Leonard, 2007). Peer mentoring can occur within a dyad, group or triad and according to Kram (1985) offers an important alternative to more traditional mentoring relationships. Peer mentoring, according to Driscoll, Parkes, Tilley-Lubbs, Brill and Bannister (2009), encourages collaborative learning between the mentor and mentee as they often work as one. Peer mentoring assumes the logic that the mentor has been through similar experiences and/or circumstances and will be well equipped to support the mentee in this (McGee, 2001.) According to Parker, Hall and
Kram (2008, p.489), “peers are more likely to identify with the ambiguity and lack of certainty in contemporary situations”. Driscoll et al. (2009) and McCormack and West (2006) found through their respective studies that mentors and mentees who are peers, often have a more comfortable and equal relationship due to the lack of a hierarchal power structure. In this respect, Goodnough, Osmond, Dibbon, Glassman and Stevens (2009) report from their study about peer mentoring that all participants described an increase in confidence due to being mentored by peers. Therefore, as Le Cornu (2005, p.358) suggests, peers as mentors do not engage in a hierarchal relationship, but are more collegial and “become co-learners and co-constructors of knowledge”.

2.3.3 Group mentoring

In this approach to mentoring the peer mentoring idea is expanded upon by intertwining it with mentoring groups (Higgins & Kram, 2001). Mentoring groups take the form of triads or larger groups of people and often involve the use of peers, as well as those who inspire others and have expertise in a particular skill. A mentoring group generally contain those in a similar profession or organisation wanting to attain similar goals and/or skills (Huizing, 2012; Kostovich & Thurn, 2006; Smith, 2007). This model of mentoring also encapsulates earlier attributes of mentoring as outlined by Eby, Rhodes and Allen in Chapter 1, that of a reciprocal learning partnership.

In this model it can be inferred that one mentor is unlikely to meet a mentee’s needs and that all of the roles of a mentor may need to be distributed among more than one mentor (Johnson, Rose & Schlosser, 2007). Higgins and Kram (2001) suggest that networks of mentors have more impact than a single mentor. These networks could consist of a peer, coordinator, supervisor or colleague, or a group of people who take on different roles within the mentoring group. McCormack and West (2006) indicate that a mentoring group often has a facilitator who guides and supports the members of the group, but there is no one person considered as the mentor. Accordingly, the members of a mentoring group are able to take on roles of both the mentor and the mentee and interchange roles throughout the relationship (Smith, 2007). Higgins and Kram (2001) suggest that the members of a mentoring group benefit from a higher level mutual trust, learning and support than a more traditional one to one mentoring relationship. According to Kram (1985), a collaborative approach to mentoring can provide opportunity for the successful achievement of goals. In this respect recent reconceptualisation of professional
placements in pre-service teacher education using group mentoring has seen the emergence of learning communities as a way to mentor and develop learning partnerships (Le Cornu & Ewing, 2008). A learning community, according to Le Cornu and Ewing (2008, p.1803), is one with a shared focus where members “learn to value the learning of others as much as their own”. A learning community in this respect promotes collaboration between pre-service teachers, shared responsibility for mentor teachers and professional growth for both mentors and mentees (Le Cornu & Ewing, 2008).

2.3.4 Mentoring triads
A mentoring triad consists of three participants; however the configuration of the triad can be dependent on the needs of the group and/or the needs of the organisation in which the mentoring is occurring. Mentoring triads have transpired from the group mentoring construct (Campbell & Lott, 2010). A search of the mentoring literature revealed limited research about the use of triads and their configuration in mentoring. However, five studies were identified in the pre-service teacher education literature using different triad configurations.

- Pre-service teacher, in-service teacher and university supervisor (Campbell & Lott, 2010)
- Pre-service teacher, in-service teacher (recent graduate) and in-service teacher (experienced teacher) (Schmidt, 2008)
- Pre-service teacher (two in the same year level) and an in-service teacher (Bullough, Young, Birrell, Clark, Eagan, Erickson, Frankovich, Brunetti & Welling, 2003; Goodnough et al, 2009; Samimi-Duncan, Duncan & Lancaster, 2010)

Table 2.5 presents a synthesis of the advantages and disadvantages of triad models using the above mentioned research.
Table 2.5 Summary of mentoring triad advantages and disadvantages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Triad formation</th>
<th>Reference</th>
<th>Advantages</th>
<th>Disadvantages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Pre-service teacher, in-service teacher and University supervisor | Campbell & Lott (2010) | • Work as a collaborative team  
• Collaborative learning – a sense of togetherness  
• Professional development and growth for all participants  
• Constantly evolving process | • Mentoring process was unclear (instability about how to mentor) |
| Pre-service teacher, in-service teacher and in-service teacher | Schmidt (2008) | • Reflective practice was encouraged  
• Mutually beneficial for all  
• Reciprocity  
• Professional growth  
• Clarified novice’s perceptions of teaching | • Difficult to construct a teaching style which was comfortable for everyone |
| Pre-service teacher (two in the same year level) and an in-service teacher | Bullough et al. (2003) | • Work as a collaborative team  
• Invested interest in each other’s development  
• Roles changed as relationship progressed  
• Children in classroom benefited  
• Collegiality  
• Opportunities for risk taking and trying out new ideas | • Initial increased workload  
• Difficult to match participants (possible personality clashes) |
| | Goodnough et al. (2009) | • Collaborative team  
• Learning from a peer  
• Sharing opportunities  
• Support from another with similar experience  
• Observe two teaching styles  
• Work cooperatively with another  
• Receive feedback from two others (from different perspectives)  
• Improved outcomes for the learners in the classroom  
• Growth in confidence | • Less individual teaching time  
• Develop less independence within as classroom  
• Loss of individuality  
• Confusion for learners (who is the lead, whose classroom rules to follow etc)  
• Competition between pre-service teachers |
| | Samimi-Duncan et al. (2010) | • Collaborative opportunities  
• Increased risk taking  
• Growth in confidence  
• Sharing opportunities (resources, lesson design)  
• Sense of trust | • Confusion for learners  
• Competition between pre-service teachers  
• Low self esteem  
• Less teaching time  
• Difficult to match participants (possible personality clashes) |
It can be seen from Table 2.5 that common themes emerge from each of the articles cited. Specifically, opportunities to work collaboratively and grow professionally were advantages that all triad configurations identified. Other similarities were improved benefits for the children in the classrooms and opportunities for the mentees to learn to teach. Each triad configuration reported different types of disadvantages such as loss of mentee’s individuality, possible personality clashes and instability about how to mentor in such a circumstance.

### 2.5.2 Summary of mentoring models

Table 2.6 summarizes the strengths and weaknesses of each of the four mentoring models explored. It can be seen from the table that each of the models offer the opportunity for a reciprocal relationship, however peer mentoring, group mentoring and mentoring triads promote collaborative learning, whereas the mentoring dyad creates a sense of belonging. There is the possibility of personality clashes in each model as well as possible confusion about roles and responsibilities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Weaknesses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mentoring dyads</td>
<td>• Experienced and inexperienced&lt;br&gt;• Potential for reciprocity&lt;br&gt;• Sense of belonging</td>
<td>• Often a top down approach&lt;br&gt;• No one to turn to if there are difficulties&lt;br&gt;• Personality clashes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer mentoring</td>
<td>• Similar experiences&lt;br&gt;• Reciprocity&lt;br&gt;• Opportunities for collaborative learning&lt;br&gt;• Little hierarchical structure&lt;br&gt;• Co-learners</td>
<td>• May not get the experience necessary&lt;br&gt;• Personality clashes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group mentoring</td>
<td>• Many mentors&lt;br&gt;• Mentors can be peers, supervisors, colleagues etc.&lt;br&gt;• Reciprocity&lt;br&gt;• High level of support&lt;br&gt;• Learning community</td>
<td>• Confusion about who to turn to&lt;br&gt;• Feeling of being left out or ‘lost’&lt;br&gt;• Personality clashes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentoring triads</td>
<td>• Two mentors&lt;br&gt;• Reciprocity&lt;br&gt;• Opportunities for collaborative learning&lt;br&gt;• Two different perspectives and opinions</td>
<td>• Confusion about roles and responsibilities&lt;br&gt;• Lost of individuality&lt;br&gt;• Personality clashes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2.6 Strengths and weaknesses of mentoring models
As shown in Table 2.6, the strengths of peer mentoring, group mentoring and mentoring triads are numerous in comparison to the traditional mentoring dyad. The weaknesses are similar in each model. However the triad model, in particular, can incorporate both group mentoring and peer mentoring, therefore creating considerable potential.

2.4 Mentoring roles

The literature suggests that mentoring is a complex undertaking, yet mutually beneficial for the participants (for example Hall et al. 2008; Heirdsfield et al. 2008; Jones & Brown, 2011). Despite this, the literature describes the roles undertaken by the mentor and mentee in relatively non-specific, general terms. For instance, terms such guide, advisor, counsellor, instructor, sharer, supporter, encourager, assistant are commonly used to describe a mentor’s role (Bray & Nettleton, 2007; Hall et al. 2008; Hopper, 2001; Sundli, 2007). The literature rarely defines each of the role components. As this research examines the roles of the mentor and mentee within the mentoring relationship it is important to examine the descriptions of the roles of the mentor and mentee as reported in the literature in order to explore the way mentoring relationship may function in practice.

A number of researchers such as Cherin, (2007) and Scalon, (2008) suggest that the context of the mentoring situation, and therefore the nature of the mentoring relationship will influence the roles undertaken and played out in a relationship. For instance, research undertaken by Raabe and Beehr (2003, p.280) on mentoring in different organisations, reported that the different contexts “might make mentoring, supervising and co-worker relationships have different effects”. The expectations or requirements of the mentor and mentee may also change in regard to the specifics of the ‘job’ or profession. A mentee teacher for instance, may be required to complete all of the roles of a teacher, whereas a mentee nurse or doctor may only be required to complete a specific number of medical procedures. From viewing the research literature, it becomes apparent that each profession uses mentoring to achieve particular goals that may be unique to the professional contexts (for example, D’Abate & Eddy, 2008). The following two sections review and explore the roles of the mentor and mentee as reported in the literature.
2.4.1 Mentor roles

As this research examines the role of the mentor from the perspective of the pre-service teacher and the mentor teacher, a detailed review of the literature concerning the role of a mentor is deemed necessary for the purpose of this dissertation.

Tables 2.7, 2.8 and 2.9 present a synthesis of selected research articles that have explored the differing roles of a mentor. The articles were chosen as they specifically outline the roles of the mentor which have emerged from research and are representative of perspectives found in the research. The research selected is not limited to teacher education; as such it also includes healthcare and business, however each table may not provide an example from each context. Research which examines the roles of mentor teachers is limited; therefore other professions have been included so that a wider examination of mentor roles is possible. Table 2.7 analyses three research studies which investigated mentor roles from the perspective of the mentor.

**Table 2.7 Roles of the mentor from the perspective of the mentor**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Focus</th>
<th>Mentor Role</th>
<th>Role Components</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Focus:** Mentor Teachers  
**Reference:** Hall, Draper, Smith & Bullough (2008) | Support  
• Critical Evaluation  
• Team Teaching | Feedback, encouragement, sharing of ideas, guiding, directing, modelling, demonstrating.  
• Observations, a place to teach, evaluate.  
• Constructive criticism, encouraging reflection, problem solving.  
• Collaboration and teaching together as a team |
| **Focus:** Nurse Mentors  
**Reference:** Kilcullen (2007) | Socialisation  
• Support in learning  
• Role model  
• Assessors | Making the mentee comfortable, introducing them to the ward and creating awareness of rules.  
• Negotiating learning objectives, giving constructive feedback, modelling and demonstration.  
• Focused on the behaviour of a nurse  
• Providing feedback or grades |
| **Focus:** Mentor Teachers  
**Reference:** Kwan & Lopez-Real (2005) | Provider of feedback  
• Counsellor  
• Observer  
• Role model  
• Equal partner  
• Critical friend  
• Instructor | Impart knowledge and skills.  
• Provide a model of the behaviour of a teacher  
• Sharing ideas and resources  
• Provide advice on performance  
• Practical instruction |

This table indicates that mentors consider their role as one of providing support for the mentee and may involve the giving of feedback, creating a comfortable learning environment.
environment, and providing an explicit representation of the job or skill that the mentee is learning. Mentors do this by offering encouragement, using specific strategies such as role modelling, observing the mentee in action and working alongside the mentee. Table 2.8 presents the role of the mentor from the mentee’s perspective.

Table 2.8 Roles of the mentor from the perspective of the mentee

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Focus</th>
<th>Mentor Role</th>
<th>Role Components</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Focus:** Mentor Teachers  
  **Reference:** Jones (2000) | • Advisor                    | • Instructing                     |
|                | • Colleague                  | • Imparting skills               |
|                | • Trainer                    | • Providing feedback             |
| **Focus:** Mentor Teachers  
  **Reference:** Maynard (2000) | • Inclusion                  | • Feeling welcome, accepted and included |
|                | • Support                    | • Advice, teamwork, communication and feedback |
|                | • Role model                 | • Effective practitioner to emulate and one who allowed mentees to try different techniques and strategies. |
| **Focus:** Mentor Teachers  
  **Reference:** Zanting, Verloop & Vermunt (2001) | • Coaching                   | • Emotional support, being friends, encouraging |
|                | • Information source         | • Providing tips, advice and suggestions |
|                | • Evaluator                  | • Assessing and providing feedback |
|                | • Critical friend            | • Motivate student to think about own practice |
|                | • Colleague                  | • Introduces student to school life |

It can be seen from this table that the mentee views the roles of the mentor as also being those of providing support and explicit instruction and training in the job or skill by including them in the work environment, providing advice and treating them as a colleague and effectively communicating with them. Table 2.9 provides a summary of the research which combines feedback from both mentors and mentees.
### Table 2.9 Roles of the mentor from the perspective of both the mentor and mentee

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Focus</th>
<th>Mentor Role</th>
<th>Role Components</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Focus:</strong> Healthcare</td>
<td>• Teacher</td>
<td>• Communicating appropriately</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reference:</strong> Bray &amp; Nettleton (2007)</td>
<td>• Supporter</td>
<td>• Listening and encouraging reflection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Facilitator</td>
<td>• Imparting skills and knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Advisor</td>
<td>• Being an example</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Guide</td>
<td>• Becoming a friend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Focus:</strong> Professional Organisations</td>
<td>• Personal and emotional guidance</td>
<td>• Acceptance and confirmation of career choice and counselling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reference:</strong> Fowler &amp; O’Gorman (2005)</td>
<td>• Coaching</td>
<td>• Modelling attitudes, values and behaviours as a standard to emulate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Advocacy</td>
<td>• Sharing ideas and perspectives, sharing understanding and knowledge of processes and providing access to information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Career development facilitation</td>
<td>• Providing feedback.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Role modelling</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Strategies and systems advice</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Learning facilitation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Friendship</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It can be seen from Table 2.9 that the role of the mentor is multi-faceted. These roles, like those in Tables 2.7 and 2.8, include providing support and advice as well as explicit instruction on job skills. The research findings summarised in Table 2.9 also identify the role of facilitator. According to Fowler and O’Gorman (2005) the role of facilitator centres on providing opportunities for career advancement and learning situations.

It can be concluded from Tables 2.7, 2.8 and 2.9 that the roles of a mentor are numerous, and that the expectations of the roles of a mentor are unclear to both mentors and mentees. Cherian (2007), in her research about learning to teach, indicates that clarity about what roles mentors are expected to perform and how they perform them is lacking in current research. Hall et al. (2008) also examined this key point about clarity of roles and found that mentors often have a different understanding of how to perform this task than those who organise the relationships. The findings also indicate that mentors and mentees consider the roles of a mentor in similar, but different ways. Mentors tend to consider their role in terms of providing support, help, instruction, and feedback and mentees view the mentor as one who supports, includes, instructs and advises.
**Descriptions of mentor roles**

The above synthesis of the mentoring roles has been used in this review to further develop understandings of the roles of a mentor as explicit clarification of the nature of the roles is needed. Table 2.10 provides an overview of a range of mentor roles and their descriptions based on the literature. The key roles that have been listed in this table are those that commonly feature in the mentoring research literature.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mentor Roles</th>
<th>Description of role</th>
<th>Role Activities - examples</th>
<th>Research Reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Supporter   | Offers encouragement and direction | • Introduces the mentee to the staff at the work site  
• Informs the mentee about rules, policies and general information about the work site  
• Provides feedback to the mentee | • Bray & Nettleton (2007)  
• Greene & Puetzer (2002)  
• Hall et al. (2008)  
• Hill et al. (2005)  
• Maynard (2000) |
| Role model  | Demonstrates and models the behaviour for the mentee. | • Models a task or action  
• Models interactions  
• Models steps or process of a task | • Bray & Nettleton (2007)  
• Greene & Puetzer (2002)  
• Kilcullen (2007) |
| Facilitator | Provides opportunities for learning and development. | • Makes time for the mentee to perform a task  
• Creates a place for mentees to action a task | • Bullough, et al. (2003)  
• Hall et al. (2008)  
• Maynard (2000) |
| Collaborator | Work alongside mentee and operates as part of a joint partnership. | • Performs work tasks together or in joint partnership  
• Plans and implements tasks together | • Fairbanks, Freedman & Kahn (2000)  
• Hall et al. (2008)  
• Webb, Pachler, Mitchell & Herrington (2007) |
| Evaluator   | Tracks the progress of the mentee. | • Appraises mentee’s progress  
• Provides feedback | • Greene & Puetzer (2002)  
• Kilcullen (2007)  
• Le Maistre et al. (2006) |
| Assessor    | Gives a grade on mentees progress using a specific set of criteria. | • Observes or takes notes on mentees performance  
• Uses criteria to mark or grade to the mentee | • Bray & Nettleton (2007)  
• Kilcullen (2007)  
• Kwan & Lopez-Real (2005)  
• Le Maistre et al. (2006) |
| Trainer/teacher | Provides mentee specific instruction about performing tasks and assists during performance. | • Provides specific instructions  
• Teach basic skills and provide resources  
• Uses explicit teaching to pass on skills and knowledge | • Bray & Nettleton (2007)  
• Bullough et al. (2003)  
• Fairbanks et al. (2000) |
| Colleague   | Treat the mentee as a professional. | • Advocates for the mentee  
• Shares professional knowledge and skills | • Bray & Nettleton (2007) |
| Friend      | Provide mentee companionship or camaraderie. | • Acts as a critical friend  
• Encourages the mentee to try new tasks or challenges | • Kwan & Lopez-Real (2005) |
| Protector   | A colleague who protects the mentee. | • Shields the mentee from unpleasant situations  
• Raises mentees profile  
• Defends mentees actions | • Hall et al. (2008)  
• Hill et al. (2005) |
The descriptions and examples of mentor roles shown in Table 2.10 suggest that mentoring requires specific skills. The table identifies interpersonal skills that a mentor needs such as communication skills, working with others and making decisions. The roles identified in this table can be explicitly linked with the three components of mentoring relationships as shown in Figure 2.2 which classifies the roles based on the mentor roles shown in Table 2.10. It can be seen that some roles, such as collaborator and role model overlap into two components. As it can be seen in Figure 2.2 the roles of supporter, colleague, friend, protector and collaborator are classified as relational components. These roles provide emotional support to the mentee as well as career guidance and advocacy. Collaborator, facilitator, assessor, trainer/teacher, evaluator and role model are classified as developmental as they enable the mentor to explicitly shape the development of the mentee's knowledge and skills. The mentor role which contributes to the contextual component is that of role model. The mentor, in this role, provides insight about how to behave and act within the workplace, as well as the overall aspects of how the job and workplace function.

**Figure 2.2 Classification of mentor roles into the mentoring components**

![Figure 2.2 Classification of mentor roles into the mentoring components](image-url)
The following key points can be concluded about mentor roles.

- The roles of a mentor are numerous
- The roles assumed by the mentor are specific to the components of mentoring
- Individual mentor roles can be multifaceted, that is each involves more than one focus (for example: supporter, role model and collaborator)

This section of the literature review has explored the role of a mentor. The following section explores the role of the mentee.

2.4.2 Mentee roles

As noted earlier, the review of the research literature about the mentee’s role in the mentoring relationship revealed limited research concerning the role of a mentee. However as mentoring is a reciprocal relationship and both mentor and mentee contribute to and benefit from the relationship, the mentee needs to have specific roles which interconnect with the mentors (Ambrosetti & Dekkers, 2010).

Walkington (2005a) considers that the mentee’s role is one of an active participant. The literature identified five research studies which consider the mentee’s roles in a mentoring relationship. Three research studies found came from the perspective of the mentee and two studies came from the perspective of the mentor. The studies focused on nursing, pre-service teacher education, and the postgraduate education context. Table 2.11 summarises these research studies.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Focus</th>
<th>Mentee Roles and Characteristics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Focus:** Education - Student teachers  
**Reference:** Freeman (2008) | • Setting personal goals  
• Open to communication with the mentor  
• Learning from the mentor: skills and knowledge about the day to day work of a teacher |
| **Focus:** Nursing  
(perceptions of the nurse mentor)  
**Reference:** Greene & Puetzer (2002) | • Openness to receiving help, learning and caring |
| **Focus:** Post graduate education  
**Reference:** Kamvounias, McGrath-Champ & Yip (2007) | • Engaging in professional conversations  
• Performing tasks as required  
• Working with the mentor in developing skills and knowledge |
| **Focus:** Education - Student teachers  
**Reference:** Walkington (2005a) | • Become involved in the day to day routine of the classroom  
• Observe the mentor in action  
• Teach lessons  
• Evaluate and reflect |
| **Focus:** Education – Student teachers  
**Reference:** Zanting, Verloop & Vermunt (2001) | • Establishing and maintaining a good relationship with the mentor  
• Be flexible and experiment with new strategies  
• Observe mentor’s teaching  
• Ask questions and discuss lessons with mentor  
• Undertake action in response to feedback  
• Think critically and offer solutions |

It can be seen from this table that the role of a mentee, as Walkington describes, is one of an active participant. It can also be seen that the mentee is responsible for their own learning through the setting of goals, engaging in professional conversations and working with the mentor. Based on the previous section, it would seem that many of the mentee roles are responses to the mentor roles. For example, a mentor may give feedback about a task, therefore the mentee’s role is to listen, reflect and apply the feedback. Kamvournias et al. (2007, p.10) describe this as “a two way exchange that illuminates the importance of the role of mentees in contributing towards the success of mentoring relationships”.

**2.4.3 Interconnectedness of the roles of mentors and mentees**

It is reasonable to suggest that for a mentoring relationship to achieve the goals set, the interactions and reactions of mentor and mentee roles are interconnected. As this research is concerned with exploring interactions between mentors and pre-service teachers during their professional placements, it is appropriate to examine the literature about the roles of
each mentoring participant and how they interact with each other. As indicated above, the review revealed that research has tended to consider the roles of mentors and mentees as separate entities, with no research studies found that investigated the interdependence or connectedness of the two roles within a mentoring relationship. However as mentoring involves people who interact with each other, a connectedness between the participants needs to occur. Tables 2.12, 2.13 and 2.14 provide a synthesis of the literature on the interconnectedness in mentoring based upon a selection of mentor roles and associated mentee roles as identified in the literature. Table 2.12 provides an overview of the interconnectedness of two relational mentoring roles, those being the supporter role and the collaborator role and the associated mentee roles.

Table 2.12 The interconnectedness of relational mentor and mentee roles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Mentor role</th>
<th>Associated mentee roles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Supporter** | Mentor role: Being Open | Being Open: 
  - Listen to the mentor
  - Implement or enact advice and suggestions from the mentor (Greene & Puetzer, 2002)
  - Bring own perceptions and beliefs to the relationship (Walkington, 2005a)
  - Alter and develop new perceptions and beliefs (Walkington, 2005a)
  - Take risks (Greene & Puetzer, 2002)

  Mentee role: Performs tasks
  - Perform tasks and actions within the work or learning environment
  - Use guidance and support from the mentor to guide how they perform the tasks (Lai, 2005)
  - Use feedback from the mentor to develop their practice (Lai, 2005)

  Mentee role: Documents own progress
  - Be responsible for documenting learning journey and outline goals to achieve. (Walkington, 2005a)

| **Collaborator** | Mentor role: Works with others (mentors, peers, other organisation staff) | Works with others: 
  - Share ideas through conversations and actions (Fairbanks et al. 2000)
  - Participate in sharing circles and team opportunities
  - Listen and take advice
  - Initiate opportunities to work with others |

Table 2.13 concerns the developmental component and provides an overview of the collaborator, facilitator, assessor and role model roles and the associated mentee roles.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Mentor role</th>
<th>Associated mentee roles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Collaborator** | **Mentor role:** Works in the role or job  
- Work along side the mentor to perform the associated roles and tasks (Bullough et al. 2003)  
- Plan and participate in joint performance of a task, drawing on another for ideas or help (Laker, Laker & Lea, 2008) | **Mentee role:** Collaborator  
- Works in the role or job  
- Plan and participate in joint performance of a task, drawing on another for ideas or help (Laker, Laker & Lea, 2008) |
| **Facilitator** | **Mentor role:** Active participant  
- Take opportunities to develop professional skills and knowledge  
- Initiate tasks to complete  
- Volunteer for performance tasks  
- Create opportunities to participate (Walkington, 2005a) | **Mentee role:** Facilitator  
- Take opportunities to develop professional skills and knowledge  
- Initiate tasks to complete  
- Volunteer for performance tasks  
- Create opportunities to participate (Walkington, 2005a) |
| **Developmental** | **Mentor role:** Performs tasks  
- Make use of opportunities facilitated by the mentor  
- Perform tasks that may be scheduled or unscheduled (Kamvournias et al. 2007) | **Mentee role:** Developmental  
- Performs tasks  
- Be familiar with the assessment criteria and uses this to guide their task performance (Bray & Nettleton, 2007) |
| **Assessor** | **Mentor role:** Performs self assessment  
- Perform critical reflection in order to self assess about task performance.  
- Use feedback from mentor with critical reflection to determine their own progress (Le Maistre et al. 2006) | **Mentee role:** Assessor  
- Performs self assessment  
- Perform critical reflection in order to self assess about task performance.  
- Use feedback from mentor with critical reflection to determine their own progress (Le Maistre et al. 2006) |
| **Role Model** | **Mentor role:** Observer  
- The mentee:  
  - Observe how a task or action is completed by their mentor.  
  - Keep observational notes  
  - Discuss observations in order to develop skills and knowledge that pertains to the job (Lai, 2005) | **Mentee role:** Role Model  
- The mentee:  
  - Observe how a task or action is completed by their mentor.  
  - Keep observational notes  
  - Discuss observations in order to develop skills and knowledge that pertains to the job (Lai, 2005)  
- **Mentee role:** Reflector  
  - Oral and written discussions which focus on own learning  
  - Reflect on own practice to develop skills and knowledge (Walkington, 2005a)  
- **Mentee role:** Develops own personal growth plan  
  - Document own future development - experiences, goals and aspirations (Lai, 2005) |
Table 2.14 provides an overview of the interconnectedness of the role of role model between the mentor and mentee.

**Table 2.14 The interconnectedness of contextual mentor and mentee roles**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Mentor role</th>
<th>Associated mentee roles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contextual</td>
<td><strong>Role model</strong></td>
<td>Mentee role: Observer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Observe mentor actions and behaviours within the work environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Listen and discuss routines, day to day management and organisational matters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Follow processes and policies within the work environment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The connections made between the role of the mentor and the role of the mentee presented in Tables 2.12, 2.13 and 2.14 have occurred through the exploration of both mentor and mentee roles. Although research in the field of mentoring has not made such connections, it can be seen from the above tables that there is interconnectedness between what the mentor and mentees do within the relationship. For instance, if the mentor is role modelling a teaching strategy, then the role of the mentee becomes one of observer and reflector. However, Norman and Feiman-Nemser (2005) believe that the expectations that both the mentor and mentee hold about the task at hand will determine how the mentoring relationship is approached and how each interact with each other. Furthermore, Lucas (2001) in her study about mentoring relationships between undergraduates and primary aged students found that the roles were redefined on a continual basis. Lucas (2001, p.460) reports that “time, experience together, and the perceptions and interpretations of each person continually redefine the roles of the mentor and the mentee”. Furthermore, as seen in the tables, the roles undertaken by both the mentor and mentee are influenced by the interactions and the situation in which they are engaged (Bullough & Draper, 2004). For example, if the pre-service teacher is implementing a learning experience (performing a task) the mentor may undertake either the assessor role or supporter role. If the mentor is playing the assessor, then the interactions that occur may focus on feedback using criteria and critical reflection rather than guidance or advice.
2.5 Communities of practice in a pre-service teacher training context

2.5.1 Introduction
As alluded to in Chapter 1, research on the use of peer and group mentoring models have features akin to a learning community or communities of practice (Bloomfield, 2009; Laker et al., 2008; Le Cornu, 2010; Samimi-Duncan, Duncan & Lancaster, 2010). The remainder of this section considers communities of practice as conceptualised by Wenger (1998 and 2006), as well as how a mentoring triad can be described as functioning community of practice (CoP).

2.5.2 Communities of Practice

Background
According to Wenger (1998) communities of practice (CoPs) exist everywhere and everyone belongs to one or more community. Communities of practice are more likely to be informal by nature, however, as indicated by Wenger (1998) people are familiar with the communities that they are part of and also know other members who are also part of the same communities. On his personal website, Wenger (2006, p.1) defines a CoP as follows:

“Communities of practice are formed by people who engage in a process of collective learning in a shared domain of human endeavour; a tribe learning to survive, a band of artists seeking new forms of expression, a group of engineers working on similar problems, a clique of pupils defining their identity in the school, a network of surgeons exploring novel techniques, a gather of first-time managers helping each other cope”.

Wenger (2006) has identified that CoPs are used in all manners of organisations and contexts. One of the first contexts to utilise CoPs was in education (Wenger, 2006). According to Wenger, (2006), both schools and teacher training have experimented with communities of practice in order to improve and transform learning. Recent research which concerns mentoring in pre-service teacher education uses the concept of a learning community rather than communities of practice (for example, Le Cornu, 2010; Le Cornu & Ewing, 2008; Samimi-Duncan, et al., 2010). However, learning communities in this context appear not to be specifically or succinctly defined to inform this research. As such, this research uses CoP as a way to define groups of people within
schools who contribute to the mentoring of pre-service teachers and uses the characteristics of a community of practice as outlined by Wenger.

**Characteristics of Communities of Practice**

Wenger (2006) has identified three characteristics of CoP which comprise a community of practice namely the ‘domain’, the ‘community’ and the ‘practice’. Each of the three characteristics is of equal importance. Wenger (2006) identifies a shared ‘domain’ of interest in which members are committed to and have a competence in, which distinguishes the members of the community of practice from other groups. Wenger, (2006) also identifies the ‘community’ as a characteristic and is where the members of the CoP interact and learn together by engaging in discussions and mutual activities, sharing information and helping each other. ‘Practice’ as a characteristic is where the members engage in shared practice. Shared practice, according to Wenger (2006), centres on the development of a collection of resources unique to the context which all group members can utilise. As such the collection of resources may include stories, experiences, tools and solutions (Wenger, 2006).

It follows that the use of a triad in this research can be envisaged as a community of practice as the triad reflects the three characteristics as described in the following:

- **The domain** - the shared domain of interest within a triad is that of (continued) development of teaching practices. Specifically though the shared interest of the triad is that of the pre-service teachers learning to teach.

- **The community** – the professional experience provides the setting for the members of the community. Within this setting the members interact through mentoring processes embedded within the professional experience which provide opportunities for professional discussion, sharing, feedback and teaching activities.

- **The practice** - the specific interactions that occur between the triad members. As such interactions occur specifically between the two pre-service teachers, the mentor and the pre-service teachers as well as all three triad members together. The interactions in this community focus on the craft of learning to teach and involve planning, teaching and reflective interactions.
**Functionality of a community of practice**

As noted by Wenger (2006) a community of practice can be of any size, be both formal and informal and use a variety of modes in which to communicate and share. In his 1998 publication Wenger states that CoPs are “in both realized and unrealized forms” (1998, p.6). He goes on to describe the forms of CoPs as potential, active or latent. In this research, the mentoring triads are formally organised in order to focus on teacher training, however the members participate according to context and develop the relationship accordingly. The context in this research focuses on the requirements of each pre-service teacher and how they undertake those requirements in the classroom and school environment. The triad as a community of practice, in this respect, operates in order to learn and negotiate meaning from the context. This research explores active communities of practice as each triad pursues specific goals. As such they negotiate the roles and responsibilities within the triad and chronicle their own history (Wenger, 1998).

As previously highlighted in this chapter, definitions of mentoring suggest a hierarchical type of relationship where there is an expert and novice, although more contemporary definitions highlight a reciprocal relationship where everyone has something to offer. Group mentoring and mentoring triads are more likely to be reciprocal than hierarchical (Bullough et al. 2003; Schmidt, 2008). As such communities of practice are not necessarily hierarchical in nature, thus when mentoring occurs in a CoP the mentees work and learn alongside others with varying levels of skills (Blair, 2008). In this type of CoP, according to Blair (2008, p.100), “the master teacher provides guidance, not the least of which is a model of mature practice, but enabling novices to interact with peers with proficiencies closer to their own provides them greater access to entering and envisioning themselves as members of that community”.

### 2.6 Summary and conclusions

This literature review has demonstrated that the concept of mentoring is well utilized in many professions and for varied reasons. The foregoing review of the literature has established that:

- The term mentoring is not well defined. Mentoring, supervising and coaching are often intertwined in the literature, however each has a different construct. (see Section 2.2)
Mentoring tends to be used for a specific purpose. There are both advantages and disadvantages to mentoring. (see Section 2.3)

There are a number of mentoring models (see Section 2.4)

Mentoring is a mutual process, that is both the mentor and mentee are able to contribute to the relationship. (see Section 2.6)

Mentoring in the pre-service teacher context can be conceptualised as a community of practice as the mentoring process mirrors the characteristics and functions of a CoP. (see Section 2.7)

Furthermore:
- Mentoring can comprise of relational, developmental and contextual components
- Mentors and mentees interact with each other in a mentoring relationship
- A mentoring relationship has a specific purpose
- Mentoring relationships change over the course of the relationship
- Mentoring can occur in groups where there may be several mentors and the mentors can be peers
- The work of a mentor is complex and multifaceted
- The roles of the mentor and mentee are interconnected

The review of the literature has revealed areas that warrant further research as follows:
- A definitive working definition for mentoring in the pre-service teacher education context does not exist.
- There is limited research which concerns the role of the mentee with most research studies concerned with the role of a mentor.
- There is no specific research which has investigated the interconnectedness between the role of the mentor and the mentee and how the roles interact and react.
- Research which specifically concerns peer mentoring is limited in the pre-service teacher context and concerns hierarchical relationship approaches.
- There is limited research which concerns the use of mentoring triads. The mentoring research tends to explore traditional mentoring dyads.

Finally the foregoing review justifies a reconceptualisation of mentoring as demonstrated in this review of the literature by the development of a working definition for mentoring.
This literature review also provides a rationale for exploring triads in the context of a community of practice. This definition is used in this research to examine the way the three components of mentoring occur in mentoring and specifically in mentoring triads. The roles of mentors and mentees as identified in this chapter will be used in the research in the development of the survey instrument, observation protocol and interview schedule.
Chapter 3
Methodology

3.1 Introduction
The previous chapters have described the background to this research. Chapter 2 in particular has identified the research gaps within the mentoring literature. This chapter introduces and presents the methodology used for this research investigation. The chapter begins by examining the research paradigm that underpins the use of and subsequent choice of a mixed methods approach. The mixed methods methodology is then outlined in regards to the qualitative and quantitative components and the data collection methods used. The chapter concludes with details of the research sample and the ethical considerations in the conduct of this research investigation.

3.2 Ontology and Epistemology

3.2.1 Ontology
Approaches in research vary greatly, providing contemporary researchers with multiple choices about how they conduct their research (Creswell, 2003). Social science research aims to produce or build knowledge about societal processes and/or explain societal processes which occur (Sarantakos, 2005). Contemporary research acknowledges that the purpose for research determines the methodology to be used (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2000). Many new types and methods of research have emerged through application, adaptation and modification of traditional methods (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2008).

Research is underpinned by several assumptions. These assumptions involve the researcher, the research and the methods used to research. A researcher must be aware of their own beliefs and how these beliefs may influence the research with regard to both the data and the findings. The assumptions which underlie any research concern beliefs about the nature of reality within the setting of the research, as well as knowledge and the means by which knowledge can be acquired. These are matters of ontology and epistemology for the research.

This research centres on the construct of mentoring, therefore the ontological beliefs of the researcher about mentoring are considered so that the research is not biased towards
the view of the researcher. This research examines the perceptions, experiences and interactions of people involved in mentoring. The researcher, having been involved in mentoring prior to the research, as explained in Chapter 1, believes that mentoring which achieves the purpose for which it is created is dependent upon several aspects. Those aspects as discussed in Chapter 2 involve the expectations of the participants in the relationship, the ‘knowingness’ about the nature of mentoring and the identification of the goals to be achieved from participating in the mentoring relationship. Therefore as ontology targets the reality of the event or situation, the research centres on the participants with respect to their beliefs, thoughts and opinions about mentoring and the experiences the mentoring enables them to have.

3.2.2 Epistemology
Epistemology, according to Creswell (2007), refers to the interrelatedness between the researcher and the topic that is being investigated. Researchers in this respect, especially those using qualitative approaches, investigate the topic ‘in the field’ (Creswell, 2007). Investigating the participants in their workplace or natural setting provides the researcher with contextual understandings of what is being said or observed. Epistemologically, this research primarily occurs in the naturalistic setting of the classroom and specifically considers the data that emerges within the classroom context. Naturalism in research requires the researcher to engage in the real world of what is being investigated (Neuman, 2009) and use methods which allow the researcher to be immersed in the setting. Naturalism involves the use of qualitative methods, in particular, and it is employed in this research to explore the use of mentoring triads; and the use of data collection procedures, that blended as much as possible into the natural setting, was required. As shown in latter parts of this chapter, the epistemology requires the use of both qualitative and quantitative methods.

3.3 Paradigms
3.3.1 Introduction
A paradigm, according to Kuhn (1970) is an orientation to theory. Lincoln and Guba (1985, p.15) state that “paradigms represent a distillation of what we think about the world (but cannot prove)”. In social science research, paradigm guides the researcher in research design and choice of research methods. A paradigm, according to Kuhn (1970), is a systematic way of doing research which encompasses the beliefs, values and views of a
group or discipline. Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2008, p.2), describe paradigms as “models of knowledge building that provide templates for studying social reality”. Known also as worldvies, paradigms are also expressed as “a basic set of beliefs and that guide action” (Guba and Lincoln, 1990, p.17). Neuman (1997) describes a paradigm as a system that includes the basic assumptions, the questions to be answered, as well as the research design. Ontology and epistemology impact upon the choice of research paradigm. Ontology and epistemology outline the paradigm’s qualities and guide the research approach. Paradigms position the theoretical perspective of the researcher as they are indicative of how the researcher ‘views the world’ (Sarantakos, 2005).

This research investigated mentoring in the pre-service teacher context. The research focused on two aspects of mentoring: firstly the perceptions and experiences that pre-service teachers (mentees) have of mentoring and secondly, the use of a triad mentoring model. The investigation into the pre-service teachers’ perceptions involved the use of both qualitative and quantitative analysis. The data were gathered during the pre-service teachers’ professional experience via an online survey tool, whereas investigation of the triad model occurred in the natural setting of the mentoring relationship.

Creswell, (2003) infers that researchers are able to draw upon different worldvies and assumptions in order to conduct research to obtain knowledge. The use of different worldvies provides the researcher with alternate perspectives from which to approach the research. Two paradigms were considered when deciding on a research approach namely a positivist paradigm and a constructivist/interpretivist paradigm; and these are considered in the next section.

3.3.2 Positivist paradigm
According to Neuman (1997, p.63) positivism is “the approach of the natural sciences”. That is positivism concerns the nature of reality. Researchers who are aligned to positivism tend to begin with a research question or by testing an already existing theory in order to explain phenomena as they “explore, explain, evaluate, predict and develop/test theories” (Sarantakos, 2005, p.11). In the purist form of the positivist paradigm the position of the researcher is objective as the researcher has no connection to research and therefore is neutral and places high value on the researcher’s neutrality. Positivism is usually associated with quantitative methods such as experiments and surveys, therefore
focusing on ‘exact measures’ which are often expressed as numerical values. Incorporation of the positivist paradigm is used to guide this research to collect data on the perceptions and experiences of mentoring. For this research an online survey which uses Likert scales is used to provide both descriptive statistics as well as to undertake comparative analysis of data samples.

3.3.4 Constructivist/interpretivist paradigm

Interpretive research, according to Sarantakos (2005), places people at the centre of the research. That is, an interpretivist seeks to understand people and their actions. Neuman (1997) describes an interpretive approach as one which is aware of the context in which the research occurs. He continues to describe an interpretive approach as one which “uses various methods to get inside the way that others see the world, and that are more concerned with achieving an empathic understanding of feelings and world views than with testing laws of human behaviour” (1997, p.73).

A researcher who utilizes an interpretive approach establishes the pattern of meaning through the participants’ construction of knowledge and meaning within the context of the investigation (Creswell, 2007). In an interpretivist paradigm, the researcher will often search for the complex view of experiences. That is they will take into account how meanings were formed, therefore considering cultural and historical aspects of the participants as well as how the researcher’s views impact upon interpretation of the meanings (Creswell, 2007). Incorporation of a constructivist/interpretivist paradigm would guide the research towards analysis of direct responses from participants which concern their perceptions and experiences. The use of qualitative data collection instruments such as observations and interviews provided opportunities to gather open ended data about mentoring triads in action.

3.4 Research approach

3.4.1 Introduction

As can be deduced from the foregoing, the researcher principally aligns this research to constructivist and interpretivist approaches. The research questions centre on mentoring people (mentor teachers and pre-service teachers), their perceptions and their experiences of a mentoring relationship. Specifically this investigation concerns:

- How mentoring is perceived and experienced by pre-service teachers.
• The interactions between the mentor and the mentee that determine the nature and type of relationship that occur during mentoring.

• An alternative mentoring model namely mentoring triads in action.

Traditionally, constructivists use qualitative methods in their research designs (Creswell, 2003; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998) while positivists use quantitative methods (Guba & Lincoln, 2005). However Creswell (2003) notes that research which only includes quantitative or qualitative methods limits what the researcher can do. Thus in today’s modern era of research, researchers use the methods they find appropriate for their specific study, rather than just relying on a single method. The following sections explore the use of qualitative and quantitative methods as well as a mixed method approach relevant to this research.

3.4.2 Qualitative methods
Qualitative research focuses on collecting data that develop a theory or pattern (Creswell, 2003). A researcher uses this method to understand social phenomena as qualitative research makes sense of an event in its natural setting (Kervin, Vialle, Herrington & Okely, 2006). A qualitative approach adopts a constructivist knowledge claim and uses case studies, narratives, ethnography and phenomenology as methods to collect data (Creswell, 2003). These methods are inductive as the conceptual constructs emerge as the data are being gathered (Merriam, 1998). According to Neuman (2009), an inductive study is one which begins with the evidence and builds towards the formulation of patterns of meaning.

During the collection of data in a qualitative approach, open ended questions are used, as well as observations, artefacts and other field research strategies. The data which emerge from the data gathering instruments will be in the form of descriptive words, phrases and sentences (Neuman, 1997). The use of qualitative methods indicates that the data will be analysed using coding to identify patterns and themes in order to generate a theory or draw conclusions (Berg, 2009).

This research utilizes specific qualitative methods of observation and interviews for the examination of mentoring triads in action. This method addresses RQ3 through the use of cases. This research also utilizes qualitative methods during the analysis of descriptive data from the online survey.
3.4.3 Quantitative methods
Quantitative research focuses on numerical data (Kervin et al. 2006; Creswell, 2003). According to Creswell (2003) a quantitative approach is typically associated with post positivist knowledge claims and uses surveys and experiments to collect data. Research that uses this approach seeks ‘to determine variables, and particularly, cause effect relationships’ (Kervin et al. 2006, p.36). This research approach is deductive, meaning that the concepts to be focused upon are identified before the research begins (Merriam, 1988). That is, the researcher begins with a clear idea of what may transpire in the investigation and then directs the research towards testing the idea as articulated by Neuman (2009). Answers to questions are translated into numbers and categories (de Vaus, 2002). It is the coding that allows the researcher to interpret the data. In this research, analysis of the online survey data was undertaken to provide descriptive data concerning the perceptions and experiences of mentoring by the first year and final year students. The data were further analysed to establish if there were differences between the first year and final year groups regarding mentoring experiences, peer mentoring and mentoring interactions.

3.4.4 Mixed methods
Mixed methods, according to a number of methodologists such as Creswell (2003) and Tashakkori and Teddlie (1998) is the use of both quantitative and qualitative methods within a single study. Tashakkori and Teddlie (1998, p.43) note that mixed methods refers to “both data collection techniques and analysis”. Research which adopts a mixed methods approach is based on pragmatic knowledge claims. According to Creswell (2003) pragmatic knowledge claims are problem based and seek solutions to problems. That is, the problem is at the centre of the research, rather than the method employed. Therefore the research uses a variety of methods and instruments to collect data in order to provide a solution to the problem. As noted by Hessie-Biber & Leavy (2008), pragmatists argue that philosophical differences between paradigms are independent and separate; therefore they can be matched to suit the inquiry.

Neuman (1997) describes the gathering of both qualitative and quantitative data as ‘complementary’, meaning that quantitative data can add value to or further explain qualitative data and vice versa. This research will utilise both qualitative and quantitative methods to gather and analyse the data about mentoring and mentoring interactions as discussed below.
A sequential mixed methods research design emerged as a natural consequence of the research questions. There are two aspects to this research investigation and a mixed methods approach allows the researcher to address these two components. Firstly there was a need to seek out pre-service teachers’ perceptions and experiences regarding mentoring relationships, specifically focusing on the nature of mentoring, the roles of mentors and mentees and the use of peers in mentoring. The second aspect of the research centres on mentoring in action. Different data collection techniques are required for each component as the first aspect will inform the second.

### 3.5 Choice of Methodology

#### 3.5.1 Introduction

In addressing the research questions in this investigation, a number of research methodologies such as case study, grounded theory and phenomenology were considered. However, as alluded to in the foregoing section, the research questions cannot be adequately addressed using one particular methodology. Therefore it was decided that a mixed methods approach would be used.

#### 3.5.2 Use of mixed methods in this research

A mixed methods approach, according to Greene, Caracelli and Graham (1989), is used for a specific purpose. Greene et al. (1989) have identified five distinct purposes as to why a researcher should choose a mixed method approach. Table 3.1 lists the five purposes and also shows the purpose for using mixed methods in this research.
### Table 3.1 Research specific purposes of choosing a mixed methods approach

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose for using a mixed method (Greene et al., 1989, p.259)</th>
<th>Links to research</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Triangulation</strong> – using quantitative and qualitative data to corroborate results.</td>
<td>Triangulation is limited within the research design as the quantitative and qualitative data is used to corroborate results descriptively.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Complementarity</strong> – elaborates, enhances and/or clarifies results from one method with the results from another method.</td>
<td>Sequential two phase design – Phase 1 results informs Phase 2 (see Section 3.6).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Development</strong> – uses the results from one method to assist in developing the other method.</td>
<td>Sequential two phase design – Phase 1 results informs Phase 2 (see Section 3.6).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Initiation</strong> – uses the methods to reframe questions and results from one method with questions or results from another method.</td>
<td>Not used in this research.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Expansion** – expands or extends the scope of the research through the use of different methods for individual components. | Three data instruments were used:  
  - Survey – pre-service teacher perceptions and experiences  
  - Observation – mentoring in action  
  - Interview – mentor and mentee mentoring triad experiences |

As shown in Table 3.1, this researcher chose a mixed methods approach for four of the purposes as classified by Greene et al. (1989). Firstly a mixed methods approach allowed for development of each of the data gathering instruments in sequence of use. The results from the survey were complementarity as they provided data with which to orientate the interaction observations and were used to guide the formulation of the questions for face to face interviews. Likewise, the findings from the observations provided question considerations for the interviews. Enhancement and clarification of the results were obtained from the use of a mixed methods approach. As each instrument was implemented, the researcher was able to clarify data gathered from the previous data analysis. This enabled accurate interpretation of the data in the latter stages of the analysis. Triangulation is used in a limited way due to the opportunities provided by the research design for such analysis.

Using a mixed methods approach also allowed for expansion of the scope of the research. The use of a combination of qualitative and quantitative data gathering instruments allowed the researcher to investigate a series of interrelated aspects of mentoring which in turn expanded the scope of the research. The survey data, which was analysed both qualitatively and quantitatively, provided an overarching picture of the nature of mentoring.
through the eyes of pre-service teachers. This picture was utilised as a backdrop for the research. Furthermore, the use of observations and face to face interviews provided multiple sources of data which were analysed both separately and in conjunction with each other. Therefore, it is anticipated that the findings will be comprehensive.

3.6 Research Design

Research design, according to a number of research methodologists such as Tashakkori and Teddlie (1998), should be dependent on the questions to which the researcher is seeking answers. That is the research questions should be the focal point of research design rather than the method to be used. Yin (2003) notes that ‘how’ and ‘why’ questions can often be answered appropriately through the use of case study methodology and ‘what’ questions are best answered through the use of survey research (Merriam, 1988). The research questions which guide this investigation are predominantly ‘how’ and ‘what’ questions, therefore leading the researcher towards a mixed methods approach.

Figure 3.1 shows that this research used a sequential research design in time that is comprised of two phases. In Phase 1 an online survey is used with both first year and final year pre-service teachers at CQUniversity’s Noosa campus. Phase 2 concerns the exploration of mentoring triads and uses an observation protocol and an interview schedule with the triad members. Each triad was deemed a case. Case studies, according to Creswell (2007), benefit from several different sources of data and therefore a combined approach of observations and interview questions would provide a more in-depth description of the interactions. This phase is scheduled during the pre-service teachers’ professional placement. The Phase 1 survey provides results which address Research Questions 1 and 2 and guide the development of the observation protocol and interview schedule for Phase 2 of the research.
3.7 Data Collection Methods and Analysis

3.7.1 Introduction

Data collection methods used for this research required the design and development of purpose built data collection instruments. An extensive search of existing instruments did not meet the needs of this research. As shown in Table 3.2, the data collection methods needed to gather data and undertake comparisons of mentoring and explore and compare the participants’ experiences of mentoring in Phase 1. There also needed to be specific data gathering instruments to examine mentoring triads in action in Phase 2.
### Table 3.2 Data Instruments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Question</th>
<th>Research Objective</th>
<th>Data Instrument Used</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RQ1 What are the perceptions of pre-service teachers about mentoring?</td>
<td>To gather and compare perceptions of mentoring from first year and final year pre-service teachers.</td>
<td><strong>Online survey</strong> which features:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Open ended questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Closed questions (Likert scale)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RQ2 What mentoring experiences do pre-service teachers encounter during their professional placements?</td>
<td>To gather and compare experiences of mentoring from first year and final year pre-service teachers.</td>
<td><strong>Online survey</strong> which features:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Open ended questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Closed questions (Likert scale)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RQ3 In the context of a mentoring triad, what are the roles of each of the participants and what interactions occur between the participants?</td>
<td>To examine mentoring in action by observing interactions between triad members.</td>
<td><strong>Observations</strong> of mentoring interactions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To investigate mentoring in action through the use of interviews.</td>
<td><strong>Interviews</strong> which feature questions about:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Interactions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Mentoring roles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Peer mentoring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• EPL experiences</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following sections provide a justification for the choice of each of the data collection methods used in this research.

### 3.7.2 Online Survey

**Instrument context**

A survey, according to Cohen et al. (2000, p.169) “gathers data at a particular point in time with the intention of describing the nature of existing conditions, or identifying standards against which existing conditions can be compared, or determining the relationships that exist between specific events”. As shown in Figure 3.1, the Phase 1 online survey specifically addressed Research Questions 1 and 2. Research Questions 1 and 2, as seen in Figure 3.1, are ‘what’ questions. Merriam (1988) recommends the use of a survey as the most appropriate way to gather data in order to answer such questions. A survey allowed a structured approach to data collection and data analysis which could also be distributed to large groups of participants (de Vaus, 2002). According to de Vaus (2002), effective
survey design is reliant on a clear understanding of the research questions and their concepts as well as how the data gathered is analysed. Details concerning the design of the online survey are considered in Chapter 4.

The choice to use an online survey rather than a paper based survey was made for several reasons. Firstly an online software package allowed the researcher to access all eligible first and final year students in a short period of time. The online method allowed for anonymous completion and for respondents’ responses to be uninfluenced by others also completing the survey in the same period of time. An online method also allowed respondents to complete the survey at a time suitable to them. Tracking the number of participants who completed or attempted the survey was another advantage of using an online tool, as it allowed the researcher to open and then close the survey according to the number of responses gathered. The online survey tool provided the researcher with the opportunity to view the data instantaneously. An online survey software package such as Zoomerang also collates the data, thus the researcher can view initial findings.

Instrument purpose
According to Cohen et al. (2000, p.78), surveys can “gather large scale data in order to make generalisations”. This was a consideration in this research, however the online survey was specifically developed for two distinct reasons. Firstly, the online survey gathered baseline data about perceptions and experiences of mentoring from pre-service teachers during their professional placement. The base line data concerned perceptions and experiences of mentoring, mentoring roles, mentoring interactions and peer mentors. The use of the survey in this instance enabled the researcher to gather information from first year students and final year students, and compare perceptions and experiences between the two groups of pre-service teaching students. Comparing the perceptions of the first year group and final year group established whether previous experiences with mentoring relationships changed the perceptions of pre-service teaching students. Secondly the data from the survey were used to identify patterns between responses. It was intended that these patterns be used to address Research Questions 1 and 2. The response patterns were also used in the development of the interview schedule for Phase 2 as they provided a focus for questions which address mentoring relationships specifically.
Using the conclusions drawn from the review of the literature maximized the validity of the online survey. As can be seen in Chapter 2, the mentoring literature was thoroughly reviewed by synthesising both seminal and contemporary mentoring research. As such, the reliability of the online survey was ensured through the use of a pilot. Bachelor of Learning Management students showed no confusion in their responses to the pilot survey. The pilot survey is outlined in Chapter 4.

**Data analysis**

Descriptive statistics were generated for a proportion of the survey questions using SPSS, a software program which a researcher can use to analyse data. Descriptive statistics, according to Menter, Elliot, Hulme, Lewin and Lowden (2011) describe and summarize quantitative data into a synopsis of key information. As such, descriptive statistics were generated for the survey questions which utilised Likert scales or asked the respondent to rank responses. The analysis of these questions focused on exploring differences and similarities. Questions which were open ended and asked the respondents to use descriptive language were coded with key words and categorised into response themes. The coding was counted and the counts were then converted to percentages.

Two statistical tests were conducted for question responses provided by the first year and final year groups. The Levine Test for equality of variances and a T-Test for equality of means were used.

The independent t-test was used to test the differences between the means of two independent groups. The t-test was particularly useful as RQs 1 and 2 required a comparison of the first year group and final year group’s responses concerning perceptions and experiences of mentoring.

Levene’s Test for Equality of Variances was used to assess the equality of variances in different samples. If the corresponding level of significance is greater than 0.05 then the assumption of homogeneity of variance is not violated, and the equal variances assumed the t-test statistics was used for evaluating the null hypothesis of equality of means. A value more than 0.05 meant that the viability in the two conditions is approximately the same, namely that the scores in one condition do not vary too much more than the scores in the second condition.
3.7.3 Observations

Instrument context

Observations provide the opportunity for the researcher to gather ‘live’ data from a ‘live’ situation (Cohen et al. 2000). That is, observations enable the study of people, their actions, body language and interactions in their natural setting. According to Yin (2003), observations provide additional data about the research topic as observations provide the opportunity for gathering data that can not be gathered through interviewing or examining documents or artefacts. Therefore observations provide a basis for establishing how the natural setting operates and how the people within the setting behave. Kervin et al. (2006) concur with Yin, describing observations as an approach which leads the researcher towards a deep understanding of the topic and its participants.

Observations can be structured or semi-structured (Creswell, 2003). Structured observations are those which are planned well before the observations occur and follow a particular format (Sarantakos, 2005). Semi-structured observations are those which have some structure, but also allow for other factors to be considered at the time of the observation. Phase 2 of the research design used observations of the mentoring triads in action. Creswell (2007) recommends the use of an observational protocol for research observations. As such an observation protocol is a “pre-designed form used to record information collected” (Creswell, 2007, p.135). The protocol helps the researcher organise what is to be observed and how it is to be observed (Creswell, 2007). The design and development of the observation protocol is outlined in Chapter 4.

Observations require the researcher to assume a role within the natural setting. Creswell (2003) lists four different types of observer ‘roles’. They are as follows:

- Complete participant – the researcher is part of the context that is being observed and is it not revealed they are observing for a specific research purpose
- Observer as participant – the researcher participates in the context, but it is known that they are observing for a specific purpose
- Participant as an observer – the researcher participates in the context, but observes in a secondary role
- Complete observer – the researcher observes without participating in the context (Creswell, 2003, p.186)
For this research, it was decided that it was more appropriate for the researcher to be a “complete observer” rather than a “participant observer” in the classroom. Details concerning the design of the observation protocol are considered in Chapter 4.

**Instrument purpose**

There were two purposes for observing the interactions between the triad members in this research. Firstly, observations enabled the researcher to observe the nature and extent of the individual members of the mentoring triads' interactions with each other in a classroom setting. Secondly, the observation data provided guidance for the development of the interview questions. The focus of the observations was the individual triad members as well as the triad group. The observations intended to provide details of the ways the triad members interacted with each other and when the interactions occurred. The ‘how’ concerned the kind of interaction that occurs, that is whether the interaction was friendly or business-like, short or long in duration, and instruction based or conversation based. The ‘when’ component concerned not only the time of the interaction, but also whether the interaction followed on from another interaction, whether it was a new interaction, as well as the cause of an interaction.

The validity of the observations was maximised through the use of the role of “complete observer” by the researcher. The use of this role ensured that the observer remained neutral, however as noted by Cohen et al. (2000) there is always the risk of the participants behaving differently in the presence of an observer. Having taught and assessed most participants within their university course work, as well as having developed a professional relationship with the pre-service teachers, provided the researcher with some insight regarding the participants’ professional behaviour. Despite this it should be noted that subjectivity towards the participants and their actions was still possible. Reliability of the observation protocol was established by testing the protocol before its use as considered in Chapter 4.

**Data Analysis**

The analysis of the interaction observations focussed on six identifiable variables of interactions between triad members relevant to the research. Each variable, as listed below, was tracked during the observation and are further explained in Chapter 4.
• Participant interactions – refers to the number of interactions that occur between the triad members.
• Interaction dominance – refers to who dominates the interaction.
• Interaction duration – refers to the amount of time the interactions occurs.
• Interaction physical proximity – refers to the physical closeness of the triad members during the interactions.
• Interaction types – refers to whether the interaction are formal or informal.
• Interaction exchanges – refers to the type of exchange that occurs.

The frequency of occurrence of the variables were counted and totalled for each triad. Each variable was then broken down into specific characteristics. The total counts were then determined accordingly for each triad. For instance, participant interactions were broken into four categories, namely first year and final year pre-service teachers only, first year pre-service teacher and mentor teacher only, final year pre-service teacher and mentor teacher only, and mentor teacher, first year and final year pre-service teachers.

3.7.4 Interviews

**Instrument context**

Interviews, according to Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) and Leedy and Ormrod (2005), can produce constructive information about an event. Fontana and Frey (2005 p.698) describe interviews as “active interactions between two (or more) people leading to negotiated, contextually based results”. They go on to state that interviews allow the researcher to investigate “the *hows* of people’s lives”. Interviews were therefore regarded as an essential element of the data gathering process as RQ3 was addressed through the use of face to face interviews in conjunction with the observations. The interviews addressed specific questions about mentoring interactions, personal experiences in the mentoring relationship, as well as roles and responsibilities. Each mentoring triad participant was interviewed individually.

Interview formats can be described as structured or unstructured (Sarantakos, 2005) and open ended or focussed (Yin, 2003). This research used a structured and focussed format where the same set of questions was asked of each group of triad members. Details concerning the design of the interview protocol are considered in Chapter 4.
**Instrument purpose**

There were two distinct purposes for using interviews as a data gathering tool in this research. The first purpose was to clarify the data and findings from the observations. The observations allowed the researcher to view the interactions of the mentoring triads in their natural setting and the interviews helped to further provide an in depth view of the identification of specific questions which drew out such information. By using the interviews as a clarification tool the validity of the instrument was enhanced.

Secondly, the interviews gathered data concerning the nature and type of interactions between the triad members, the roles undertaken by each triad member and how peer mentors were utilised within the triad model. Using a semi structured interview format provided opportunities to ask direct questions and then clarify responses from each respondent. The semi structured format of the interview schedule enhances the reliability of the data gathered as the semi structured format ensures that each participant is asked the same set of questions (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). Further detail about the design and development of the interview schedule is presented in Chapter 4.

**Data analysis**

The analysis of the interviews used a coding system which highlighted key words and phrases in the interview scripts. The coding system was identified prior to the analysis of the data and was linked specifically to the three components of mentoring as discussed in Chapter 2. Through an examination of the literature each of the three components was deconstructed so that key words and phrases which represent each component were identified. Table 3.3 presents the three components and their representative key words and phrases used for the data analysis.
Table 3.3 Key words and phrases of mentoring components

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relational</th>
<th>Developmental</th>
<th>Contextual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Communication</td>
<td>• Guidance</td>
<td>• Teacher role modelling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Team approach</td>
<td>• Critical feedback</td>
<td>• Working in the role</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Nurture</td>
<td>• Confidence</td>
<td>• Immersion in school and classroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Help/assistance/support</td>
<td>• Role model</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Friendship</td>
<td>• Learner</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Opportunity for practice teaching</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Experience</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Collaboration</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.8 Research Sample

3.8.1 Introduction

According to Neuman (2009), the research sample is determined by the research purpose. There are numerous ways of determining research samples and these can be classified into random (or probability) and non-random (or purposeful) methods (Cohen et al. 2000; de Vaus, 2002; Leedy & Ormrod, 2005; Neuman, 2009; Teddlie & Yu, 2007). Both phases of the research design utilised a purposive sample. The online survey utilised non-random samples of first year and final year pre-service teachers, whereas investigation of the mentoring triad was an opportunistic sample. An opportunistic sample is also classified as a non-random sample as it makes use of a group already formed (Cohen et al., 2000). The procedure for determining the samples is discussed in the following sections.

3.8.2 Determining the sample

Phase 1 and 2 samples were determined during the research design process. Both phases utilized first year and final year pre-service teachers. The sample for Phase 1 was limited to one campus and only involved first year and final year pre-service teachers. First year and final year pre-service teachers were chosen as the sample for the survey so as to enable a comparison of responses.

Table 3.4 presents the details of the survey sample. There was a total of 155 first year and final year pre-service teachers who were eligible to participate in the research. These included pre-service teachers who were undertaking early childhood, primary and secondary specialities. As shown in Table 3.2, the majority of participants were female.
The sample for Phase 2 consisted of pre-identified mentoring triads. The triads had been identified from the placement data and were naturally occurring. Again the sample for Phase 2 was limited to one campus. Four triads were identified from the data, however during the research one of the pre-service teachers discontinued the EPL placement. It can be seen from Table 3.5 that there were three triads in Phase 2 of the research.

### Table 3.4 Online survey sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year Level</th>
<th>Sent to</th>
<th>Gender</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Males</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First year</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Year</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 3.5 Triad sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instrument Sample</th>
<th>Observation and Interview</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Triad 1 Preparatory classroom</td>
<td>Mentor: Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Final Year: Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>First year: Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Triad 2 Year 1/2 composite classroom</td>
<td>Mentor: Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Final Year: Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>First year: Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Triad 3 Year 3 classroom</td>
<td>Mentor: Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Final Year: Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>First year: Female</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 3.9 Research Ethics

The researcher sought and obtained ethics approval from Central Queensland University’s Human Research Ethics Committee (ethics approval number: H09/05-032). Appendix A.1 presents the letter of approval from the CQU Human Research Ethics Committee. Approval to conduct the research in Queensland state schools was obtained from Education Queensland by way of a letter of consent from each nominated school’s Principal, which was Education Queensland’s research ethics policy at the time. Appendix A.2 presents an example of the letter sent to school Principals seeking
permission to undertake research in a state school. The granting of approval for the research depended on assurances of confidentiality and anonymity. All participants, including schools, were assigned a pseudonym so that they were unidentifiable to each other and others. Figure 3.2 outlines the ethical considerations for the participants in the research.

Due to the familiarity between the researcher, mentor teachers and pre-service teachers, provision was made to protect the participants in the research. Such provisions included having a teaching school coordinator who was uninvolved in the research on hand to deal with any academic or placement issues that the participants in the study may have experienced. The scheduling of the research was also carefully considered so that the data collection took place at a time which differed from the researcher’s teaching school coordination duties.

**Figure 3.2 Ethical considerations for participants**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase 1</th>
<th>Phase 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Survey</td>
<td>Observations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• First year BLM pre-service teachers</td>
<td>• Triad 1 – Mentor teacher, first year BLM pre-service teacher &amp; final year BLM pre-service teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Final year BLM pre-service teachers</td>
<td>• Triad 2 - Mentor teacher, first year BLM pre-service teacher &amp; final year BLM pre-service teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Information sheet attached to participant invitation email</td>
<td>• Triad 3 - Mentor teacher, first year BLM pre-service teacher &amp; final year BLM pre-service teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Consent agreement built into online survey</td>
<td>• Information sheet mailed with participant invitation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Consent form mailed to participant with participant invitation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.10 Summary

This chapter has detailed the research design methodology that has been used in this investigation. The choice and use of a mixed methods approach has been justified and explained. Details of the data collection instruments to be used have been outlined. The research samples used and the ethical issues involved have been explained. Chapter 4 presents the design, development and administration of the data gathering instruments introduced in this chapter.
Chapter 4
Design, Development and Administration of Data Collection Instruments

4.1 Introduction

The previous chapter outlined the research design and methodology used in this research. The research design consisted of two data collection phases that utilised three data collection instruments as identified in Chapter 3. This chapter details the design, development and administration of each of the three data collection instruments used in this research. Table 4.1 provides an overview of each of the three data collection instruments.

Table 4.1 Data collection methods

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Phase</th>
<th>Instrument</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Data to be collected</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Phase 1</td>
<td>Survey</td>
<td>• First year pre-service teachers enrolled in their first professional placement</td>
<td>Participants perceptions and experiences of: • mentoring • roles of mentor teachers • roles of pre-service teachers • peer mentors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Final year pre-service teachers enrolled in their concluding professional placements</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phase 2</td>
<td>Observation of Triads</td>
<td>• Mentor teacher • First year pre-service teacher • Final year pre-service teacher</td>
<td>Interactions in the classroom between the mentoring triad participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cases</td>
<td>Interviews of triad members</td>
<td>• Mentor teacher • First year pre-service teacher • Final year pre-service teacher</td>
<td>In depth examination of interactions and the triad model</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.2 Design and Development of the Online Survey

4.2.1 Introduction

This section details the design, development and administration of the online survey used in Phase 1 of the data collection. As no online survey existed that could have been used or adapted for this research, a survey was designed and developed to specifically explore perceptions and experiences of mentoring and mentoring roles, as well as to obtain
insights about peer mentoring in professional placements. Figure 4.1 outlines the overall process used in the design, development and administration of the survey instrument.

**Figure 4.1 Overview of the design, development and administration of the online survey instrument**

4.2.2 Design considerations for the online survey
The construction of the online survey took into account several design considerations. These considerations are listed in Figure 4.2 and are discussed in detail below.

**Figure 4.2 Online survey design considerations**
**Survey type**

Surveys vary in type and form. They can be paper based where the participants write their answers onto a question and answer sheet. Surveys can also be verbal, where questions are asked and responses are recorded by the interviewer. However, in recent times, web based (or online) surveys have become a frequent phenomenon. This is because online surveys may be distributed widely and cheaply through electronic means, and they allow researchers to access responses more quickly than conventional means (Neuman, 2009).

The decision to administer the survey online was made for the following reasons.

- First year students spend only two days each week at university attending lectures. Each day of attendance is fully scheduled with lectures and workshops, therefore there are few opportunities for them to complete a paper based survey.

- Final year students were attending a block placement at the time of the survey; therefore access to the students was non existent, and there were no opportunities for them to complete a paper based survey.

- Surveys were to be completed anonymously and without any influence from the researcher (who is someone with whom they are familiar). Employing an online survey allowed some distance between the researcher and the respondents.

**Survey structure**

There is no one way to structure or format a survey (de Vaus, 2002). However it is recommended that the structure allows for an experience which is comfortable and non-threatening for the participants (deVaus, 2002; Neuman, 2009). With this in mind, the structure used, as suggested by Neuman (2009), was adapted with an introduction to the topic and used simple, straightforward questions to assist the participant to become comfortable with the process.

It is also recommended by Neuman (2009) that the questions in a survey be organised into sections or themes. This allows the researcher to group questions about a topic together and assists the respondent to focus on the topic (Neuman, 2009).

The structure of the online survey for this research investigation organised the questions according to the areas as outlined in Section 4.2.3. Each section of the survey included a brief introduction to orientate the respondents to the question areas.
**Question types**

The questions posed in surveys can be open or closed (de Vaus, 2002). Open questions are those that allow the respondent to devise their own answer. In contrast, closed questions contain a number of responses from which the respondent chooses or ranks; these types of questions are often referred to as forced-choice questions (de Vaus, 2002). According to de Vaus, closed questions are easy to code and analyse, whereas open questions are more difficult to analyse as they are open to misinterpretation or are not useful at all. De Vaus recommends that the researcher develops questions that correspond with the research question and enables the respondents to provide responses which reflect their own thoughts about the topic.

In this survey both open and closed questions were used to examine perceptions and experiences of mentoring. Open ended questions were included so that the respondents could respond in their own words. Closed questions involved the use of Likert style questions where the respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement or disagreement regarding a statement or rank provided responses in a particular order (de Vaus, 2002).

**Target Audience**

As discussed in Chapter 3, the online survey targeted two groups of respondents – first year and final year pre-service teachers. By targeting two groups in different years of the program, consideration needed to be given to the number of professional placement days the respondents had completed. This factor was a design consideration that needed to be taken into account as each cohort would have had different levels of exposure to mentoring. This required the survey to contain a number of questions that were only pertinent to one of the targeted groups. For instance, the final year group was asked questions regarding their roles as mentors to other pre-service teachers. Therefore, two surveys were prepared - one for the first year group and another for the final year group. Appendix B.2 and B.3 contains both the first year and the final year group surveys.

**Survey length**

A survey’s response rate can be linked to survey length (de Vaus, 2002). According to Neuman (2009) few participants will spend more than fifteen minutes, on average, completing an online line survey. The length of the online survey in this research was an
important design consideration as university students often feel burdened by many requests to complete surveys and evaluations. From my experiences at the university, the students only choose to complete surveys whose topics interest them and those which do not impose on their study time. These factors determined the survey length. Thus a timeframe of fifteen to twenty minutes was built into the design considerations in order to ensure a reasonable response rate.

4.2.3 Development of the survey

Survey development is well documented in the research literature and examples of surveys are many in number and variety (Neuman, 2009). The process followed to develop the online survey is shown in Figure 4.3.

*Figure 4.3 Survey development process*
Research questions and survey areas

The conceptualisation of the online survey structure was based on the research questions as shown in Figure 4.4 using questions grouped in four areas. In order to address the validity of the survey’s content, the conclusions from the literature review in Chapter 2 regarding the nature of mentoring and the roles of mentors and mentees were drawn upon. As the research concerned the perceptions and experiences of pre-service teachers during their professional placement, this literature could be grouped into four areas in order to address the RQs and was validated as part of the developmental processes and is considered in the next section.

Figure 4.4 Research questions and mentoring areas

Each area considered both perceptions and experiences of the pre-service teachers is as follows.

Area 1 - Perceptions and experiences of mentoring

This area concerned the components of mentoring, the mentoring process as well as the pre-service teacher’s expectations of EPL (Embedded Professional Learning).
Area 2 – Roles and relationships of mentor teachers and pre-service teachers
This area centred on the roles and relationships between mentor teachers and pre-service teachers. It also concerns the interactions that occur between the mentor and pre-service teacher during the EPL.

Area 3 – Associations with other pre-service teachers at the teaching school
This area addressed the benefits and limitations of having another BLM (Bachelor of Learning Management) pre-service teacher at the same teaching school and the types of interactions that were experienced by the BLM students.

Area 4 – Peer mentoring
This area only applied to the final year student survey and concerned a final year student’s potential roles as a peer mentor of a first year student who is placed in the same classroom.

Development and review of the draft survey
The survey question development process involved the generation of a question item pool by the researcher, followed by pilot testing. The initial development of the survey began with the construction of a paper based first draft of the survey by the researcher that contained questions that covered each of the four survey areas. A pool of between five to ten questions was generated for each area by the researcher in consultation with her supervisors. A total pool of forty questions was generated. A fifth section of the survey was prepared to obtain details of participant demographic and consisted of five questions. A second draft was prepared to refine the questions and extend the pool of items. As such, questions were refined and some questions were substituted with others.

The third draft was prepared in a format to be used to undertake a peer review of the survey instrument. For the peer review, the survey was distributed to a group of four education academics in order to address content validity of all questions and for an overall review. The members of the review group chosen had previous experiences with surveys and had experiences with pre-service teachers during a professional placement. Table 4.2 presents a snapshot of the reviewers used.
Table 4.2 Peer reviewers of draft survey

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reviewer</th>
<th>Reviewer details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reviewer 1</td>
<td>Lecturer - BLM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teaching School Coordinator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reviewer 2</td>
<td>Lecturer - BLM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teaching School Coordinator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reviewer 3</td>
<td>Senior Lecturer – BLM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Previously a Teaching School Coordinator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reviewer 4</td>
<td>Senior Lecturer – BLM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Previously a Teaching School Principal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The reviewers were asked to provide feedback about the survey questions in regard to question type, appropriateness in addressing the research questions, interpretability and structure using the five questions that needed to be addressed as shown in Table 4.3. In undertaking the review, the reviewers were provided with the research questions, the scope of the research investigation, and a copy of the survey.

Table 4.3 Reviewer questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reviewer Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Are the questions well constructed and unambiguous?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Are there any irrelevant questions or questions which lead the participant to a particular answer?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Do the open ended questions provide scope for a detailed answer?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Do the questions provide information which will assist in answering the research questions?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Do you think the arrangement of questions into topics are logical and allows the participant to understand what is being asked?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Feedback from the reviewers concerned the need for a wider variety of question type as well as a greater focus on the construct of mentoring. For example, the draft survey contained questions which required a yes/no response only. The reviewers suggested that more open ended questions be included, as well as Likert scale questions and/or multiple choice questions to enable a more in depth exploration of mentoring as it related to the RQs. For instance, there were some questions that concerned the tasks that the pre-
service teachers undertake during their professional placements. It was suggested that these questions did not relate to the research questions.

On considering the survey feedback, revisions were made according to suggestions from the reviewers. The survey was then redrafted and formed the basis of the pilot survey to be implemented with a group of students. An outline of the pilot survey can be seen in Table 4.4.

**Preparation of the online survey**

This section outlines the process for the preparation of the online survey. There are many online survey websites which administer a survey such as Survey Monkey (www.surveymonkey.com, 2008) and Zoomerang (www.zoomerang.com, 2008). Both of these online software tools were considered in regards to the cost, software capabilities, look, control and ownership of the end product. Zoomerang was the chosen software as it had the capabilities to customise the survey to individual needs as well as the range of question types that could be utilised in the survey. Zoomerang was also chosen as the researcher had previously used this software in another research project and was confident that it could meet the needs of the researcher. Two drafts of the online survey were prepared. The first draft was essentially a translation of the paper version of the survey into an online format. There were few issues with this translation; however some Likert scale questions were altered in regards to the question format and rating options. After the colour scheme for the survey presentation was decided upon, each page of the survey was created by selecting the question types and entering the questions and the response options. Figure 4.5 provides an example of the survey formatting and colour scheme.
The completion of this draft was used for the pilot survey.

**Pilot survey**

A pilot survey was undertaken which, according to Neuman (2009), can improve the research investigation’s reliability of the data collection instrument and content validity. The pilot survey was administered to the 2008 cohort of first year students, whereas the final survey was administered to the 2009 cohort of first year students. The pilot survey was administered via Zoomerang. The online survey questions were organised according to the following headings:

- Consent form and Section A (*EPL and your Teaching School experiences*)
- Section B (*Mentoring, You and your mentor teacher, You and the Lead Learning Manager, You and other BLM students, You and your needs*)
- Section C (*Supporting you*), Section D (*Other comments*) and Section E (*About you*)

The analysis of responses to the pilot survey revealed the following issues:

- Opportunities for the pre-service teachers to express their own perceptions about mentoring were limited. The forced choice questions only provided a limited view of their perceptions about mentoring.
- There was a need for more specific questions concerning the peer mentor and mentoring relationship, as little information was gained about this concept.
- Some questions in the pilot survey did not provide information that was directly related to the research questions.
• Not all questions were answered in each survey, indicating that the survey was too lengthy or the questions were not clearly articulated.

Each issue was addressed by way of examining each survey area and the questions which were part of the area. Questions which did not specifically provide information about the pre-service teacher’s perceptions and experiences of mentoring were deleted and questions which were not well responded to were redrafted. Several open ended questions were included with other closed questions deleted. Few participants responded to the question in section D which asked the respondents to share other aspects of their EPL experiences, therefore this question was deleted.

The following section outlines the choice of online tool as well as describing the final online survey used in this research.

**Description of the online survey**

In considering the feedback from the pilot survey, several formats were prepared in order to establish a format that was easy to read and complete. Table 4.4 shows the sections used in the pilot survey and the formats used for final surveys (first year survey and final year survey). It can be seen from Table 4.4 that the final surveys had fewer questions and the sections more succinct. The administered online surveys can be seen in Appendix B.2 and B.3.
### Table 4.4 Comparison of pilot survey and final survey components

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pilot Survey</th>
<th>Final Survey</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Section A</strong></td>
<td><strong>Section 1</strong> – Your perceptions about mentoring (3 questions)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Embedded Professional Learning and your Teaching School experiences (5 questions)</td>
<td><strong>Section 1</strong> – Your perceptions about mentoring (3 questions)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Section B</strong></td>
<td><strong>Section 2</strong> – You and your mentor teacher (10 questions)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Mentoring (4 questions)</td>
<td><strong>Section 2</strong> – You and your mentor teacher (13 questions)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• You and your mentor teacher (6 questions)</td>
<td><strong>Section 3</strong> – You and other BLM students at your Teaching School (2 questions)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• You and the Lead Learning Manager (3 questions)</td>
<td><strong>Section 3</strong> – You and other BLM students at your Teaching School (2 questions)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• You and other BLM students (7 questions)</td>
<td><strong>Section 4</strong> – Mentoring and other BLM students (3 questions)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• You and your needs (1 question)</td>
<td><strong>Section 4</strong> – About You (5 questions)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Section C</strong></td>
<td><strong>Section 5</strong> – About You (5 questions)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supporting You (7 questions)</td>
<td><strong>Total number</strong> of questions: 28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Section D</strong></td>
<td><strong>Total number</strong> of questions: 27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other comments (1 question)</td>
<td><strong>Total number</strong> of questions: 27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Section E</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>About you (5 questions)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total number</strong> of questions: 39</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It can be seen in Figure 4.6 the variety of question types used in the final surveys.
As an online survey prevents the participants from signing a consent form, an agreement was built into the survey as shown in Figure 4.7. Participants were required to tick the agree response to participate, otherwise the participants were locked out of the survey.
4.2.4 Administration of the instrument

The administration of the instrument used the process steps as shown in Figure 4.8.
Survey distribution
Surveys, according to Leedy and Ormrod (1989), capture responses at a particular point in time. Accordingly, the administration of this survey took place whilst both the first year and final year groups were undertaking their professional experience placement. This was deemed as the most appropriate point in time to collect such data as the pre-service teachers were immersed in a mentoring relationship.

An online survey link for participants was established to enable participants to access the survey. The online survey link was emailed to the first year and final year groups. Student email addresses were used for this communication. An information sheet for participants outlining the research project was also included in the email. The information sheet can be seen in Appendix B.1.

Survey sample
As described in Chapter 3, the sample for the online survey consisted of first year and final year pre-service teachers from the Noosa campus of CQUniversity. The sample included pre-service teachers from early childhood, primary and secondary programs. Table 4.5 provides details of the survey response rate.
Table 4.5 Survey response rate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year Level</th>
<th>Distributed To</th>
<th>Response Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First year</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final year</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Survey administration
Respondents were provided a two week timeline in which to complete the survey. Reminder emails were sent during that period. A further week was provided to allow for more completions and a further reminder email was sent during this period.

4.3 Design and Development of the Observation Protocol

4.3.1 Introduction
This section describes the design, development and administration of the observation protocol used in Phase 2 of the research design as described in Chapter 3. The observations focused on mentoring in action, that is, the interactions that occur between the three members of the mentoring triad. Figure 4.9 outlines the considerations and processes undertaken to design and develop the observation protocol.

Figure 4.9 Overview of the design, development and administration of the observation protocol
4.3.2 Design considerations

There were four design considerations in the development of the observation protocol. These considerations are shown in Figure 4.10 and are discussed in detail below.

**Figure 4.10** Design considerations for the observation protocol

---

**Observation protocol format**

Structured observations, as described in Chapter 3, were chosen for this method for two reasons. Firstly there were limited opportunities for the observations due to the professional experience timeline set by the University. That is the first and final year students had limited professional experience days scheduled at the same time. Secondly, the specific data to be gathered was identified prior to the observations taking place, therefore it was determined that a structured format would provide the circumstance which would ensure that the research collected such data.

**Observation protocol features**

As the observations used a structured format, consideration of what needed to be observed during the time in the classroom was needed. Existing observation protocols were viewed in order to identify possible observational headings. Viewing such existing observation protocols was helpful, as it identified what to observe within the interactions.
Such interaction observation headings included eye contact between the participants, dominance of particular participants, body language and gestures. The headings provided a starting point for the researcher in the design of the protocol features. The viewing of existing observation protocols also provided examples of the layout and how observational information was recorded, thus providing examples of descriptive notes, short notes and checkboxes.

**Observation length and frequency**

In this research, as detailed in Section 4.3.4, observations of each triad occurred twice for Triads 1 and 3 and once for Triad 3. The length of the observations were in line with school session times. For instance, observations occurred during morning or afternoon classes. School sessions were of one to two hours duration; therefore the observations also occurred over these periods of time.

**Observer role**

In the use of the observation protocol, consideration was given to the role the researcher would assume during the observations. As noted in Chapter 3, it was decided that it was appropriate for the researcher to take on the role of ‘complete observer’. In the role of ‘complete observer’ the researcher secured a discrete place at each site to avoid classroom distractions and focus on the adult participants. Having no physical presence in the classrooms allowed the researcher to make detailed observational notes.

4.3.3 **The development process**

The observation protocol for this research was developed prior to the start of Phase 2. Figure 4.11 outlines the process used for the development of the observation protocol.
Observation areas

The observation protocol, along with the interview schedule, was used to address Research Question 3 as shown in Figure 4.12 and concerned interactions that occurred between the triad members in terms of the areas.
### Figure 4.12 Research questions and observation areas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RQ3</th>
<th>In the context of a mentoring triad, what are the roles of each of the participants and what interactions occur between the participants?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Area 1</td>
<td>Types and frequency of mentee interactions with peer mentors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area 2</td>
<td>Types and frequency of interactions between first year pre-service teachers and mentor teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area 3</td>
<td>Types and frequency of interactions between final year pre-service teachers and first year pre-service teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area 4</td>
<td>Types and frequency of interactions between final year pre-service teachers and mentor teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area 5</td>
<td>Types and frequency of interactions within the triad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observation protocol</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The areas are described as follows:

**Area 1 - Types and frequency of mentee interactions with peer mentors**

This area concerned the interactions the first year pre-service teacher had with final year pre-service teachers. It specifically concerned when the interactions that occurred between the two pre-service teachers in the classroom.

**Area 2 - Types and frequency of interactions between first year pre-service teachers and mentor teachers**

Area 2 centred on the interactions between first year pre-service teachers and the mentor teachers. It addressed what interactions occurred and when they occurred in the classroom.
Area 3 - Types and frequency of interactions between final year pre-service teachers and first year pre-service teachers

This area is similar to area 1; however area 3 centred on final year pre-service teachers and the interactions that they engage in with first year pre-service teachers. Specifically this area centred on the types of interactions the final year pre-service teacher initiated with the first year pre-service teacher, when they occurred and the circumstances in which they occurred.

Area 4 - Types and frequency of interactions between final year pre-service teachers and mentor teachers

This area addressed the interactions between the final year pre-service teacher and the mentor teacher. This area specifically addressed the types of interactions and when they occurred in the classroom.

Area 5 - Types and frequency of interactions within the triad

This area concerned the interactions that involve all three members of the triad. It specifically centred on the types of interactions, when they occurred, how they occur and why they occurred.

Development of the observation protocol

The development of the observation protocol involved the sourcing of research methods texts (for example, Cohen et al. 2000) to identify appropriate observational features to use. Through discussions with the researcher’s supervisor and reference to the general literature on interaction analysis in education it was decided that the protocol features (Berliner & Biddle, 1995; Brophy & Good, 1986), as shown in Figure 4.13 would be used.
The descriptions of each of the features are as follows:

- **Respect** refers to the gestures the participants may make to each other, their tone of voice and the types of requests and the responses to those requests that occur among participants.

- **Friendliness** refers to the willingness, interest and openness to participate in the interaction.

- **Eye contact** refers to whether the triad members make eye contact during the interactions.

- **Body language** refers to the stance and gestures of the body during the interactions.

- **Proximity** refers to the physical closeness of the triad members when interacting with each other. The physical proximity of the participants was measured and classified into three categories; those being *very close*, *1-2 metres apart* or *more than two metres apart*.

- **Interaction type** refers to whether the interaction is of a formal or informal nature. A formal interaction is one where the participants show respect and courtesy towards each other by using eye contact, formal speech and tone of voice as well as open body language. An informal interaction however may be one that is more causal, with little eye contact and less formal language being used.

- **Interaction exchange** refers to the type of exchange that take place. Formal exchanges were classified as *direction, clarification, verbal cue, non verbal cue, advice or general comment* whereas informal exchanges were classified as *general conversation or small talk*.

- **Duration** refers to the amount of time the interactions involved. The timing began when the participants began talking or motioning to each other and stopped when
the interaction was completely finished. The interaction durations were timed and classified into the following categories - less than 10 seconds, less than 60 seconds, 1 minute – 2 minutes, 2 minutes – 5 minutes or more than 5 minutes.

- **Dominance** refers to who leads and speaks the most during the interaction. The categories of first year pre-service teacher, final year pre-service teacher, mentor teacher and no dominance were used to classify dominance.

**Pilot testing of the observation protocol**

Pilot testing of the protocol involved testing it in a real life classroom before using it to collect data from each triad. A pilot test was undertaken to establish suitability for the recording of the observational data using the above listed features and to establish the content validity of each of the features. The testing occurred in one of the triad classrooms and was carried out by the researcher. The pilot testing ran for one hour and did not involve all triad members (only two members were present). It was found that the headings developed for the protocol were comprehensive and covered all aspects of the interactions.

**Preparation and description of the final observation protocol**

The feedback from the pilot testing was used to prepare the protocol to be used with the three triads in action in a classroom setting. The space allowed in which to record short notes and descriptive notes in the observation protocol was appropriate, however it was decided that checkboxes would be included for headings such as participants and eye contact. The checkboxes reduced the amount of short note documentation and assisted with time management of data recording. Once analysis of the pilot test was complete, the final draft of the observation protocol was constructed.

The final protocol featured the headings as presented in Table 4.6. These were used to prepare the actual protocol as presented in Appendix C.3
### Table 4.6 Observation protocol final headings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Observation Protocol</th>
<th>Observation Protocol</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Participants involved</td>
<td>• Eye contact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Time of interaction</td>
<td>• Body language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Interaction length</td>
<td>• Dominance (who dominates the conversation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Interaction type (formal/informal)</td>
<td>• Friendliness of the participants towards each other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Where the interaction occurs (part of classroom, outside etc)</td>
<td>• Respectfulness of the mentee towards the mentor and peer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Proximity of participants</td>
<td>• Substance of verbal exchanges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Others involved in the interaction</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Actions of each participant during the interaction</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 4.3.4 Administration of the instrument

The process used to administer the observation protocol is shown in Figure 4.14.

**Figure 4.14 Administration process for the observation schedule**
**Observation sample**

The observation sample consisted of the three mentoring triads as detailed in Chapter 3. Each triad observed consisted of a mentor teacher, a first year pre-service teacher and a final year pre-service teacher.

**Observation schedule**

The observation session for each triad was subject to negotiation with each mentor teacher and took the schedule of the host classroom into consideration. The mentor teacher nominated the specified time for each of the observation sessions as can be seen from Table 4.7. As shown in the table, the observations of Triad 1 and 2 were scheduled on different days of the week at different session times. There was only one observation of Triad 3, however the observation lasted for four hours and covered two classroom sessions. Observations of both Triad 1 and Triad 2 lasted approximately 1 to 2.5 hours and included classroom break times.

**Table 4.7 Observation schedule**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Observation</th>
<th>Triad 1</th>
<th>Triad 2</th>
<th>Triad 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Observation 1</td>
<td>9 September 2009 Morning session</td>
<td>9 September 2009 Afternoon session</td>
<td>10 September 2009 Morning and middle session</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observation 2</td>
<td>16 September 2009 Afternoon session</td>
<td>16 September 2009 Morning session</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Observation administration**

A participant information sheet and consent form for Phase 2 of the data gathering were provided to each participant prior to the observations taking place. The participant information sheet and consent form can be seen in Appendix C.1 and C.2. Prior to the administration of the observations, a code was created to keep track of each observation as they were documented. The code consisted of labelling each observation schedule as Triad 1, Triad 2 and Triad 3 and the interactions were coded according to the order in which they occurred. Using Triad 1 as an example, interaction 1 was coded as 1.1; interaction 2 may be coded as 1.2; and so on. Appendix C.4 contains an example of a completed schedule.
4.4 Design and Development of the Interview Protocol

4.4.1 Introduction
As discussed in Chapter 3, the second part of Phase 2 used interviews to draw out specific information in addressing Research Question 3. Figure 4.15 shows the three step process undertaken to design and develop and administer the interview.

**Figure 4.15 Overview of the design and development of the interview schedule**

4.4.2 Design considerations
There were four design considerations in the development of the interview schedule. These considerations are shown in Figure 4.16 and are discussed in detail below.

**Figure 4.16 Design considerations for the interview schedule**
**Interview format**

This phase of the research investigated multiple cases of identified mentoring triads, using the same set of questions in the interview schedule for each triad. In this respect Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) recommend using themes or areas within the interview to assist the interview to follow a logical sequence and keep ‘like questions’ together. The areas of the interview protocols are discussed in depth in the next section.

**Question types**

Interview questions, like those in surveys can be closed or open ended. Closed questions in interviews are usually answered by a yes/no response. Berg (2009) classifies open ended questions in interviews into three categories - essential questions, throw away questions and probing questions. The interview schedule for this research mostly used open ended questions but utilised all question types as classified by Berg (2009) so as to gather data rich in detail.

**Interview length**

According to Berg (2009), the length of an interview should correspond to the number of research questions to be addressed. The interview in this research addresses one research question; therefore the interviews with the triad members will be shorter in length. The interview schedule contained ten ‘essential’ questions for each interview, so a 20-30 timeframe was allocated for each interview. This timeframe allowed for throw away and probing questions to be included. The interviews can be seen in Appendix D.1, D.2 and D.3.

**Target audience**

The target audience for the interview schedule was each of the three members of the triads namely the first year pre-service teachers, the final year pre-service teachers and the mentor teachers.

4.4.3 The development process

Figure 4.17 shows the process used for the development of the interview schedule.
**Research question and interview areas**

The design considerations for the interview schedule, as with the observation protocol, was informed by Research Question 3. According to Berg (2009), interview questions should be directly linked to the concepts contained in the research question. As can be seen in Figure 4.18, there are three areas addressed in Research Question 3. These areas were used as a basis for the development of the interview questions.

**Figure 4.18 Interview schedule areas**

RQ3 In the context of a mentoring triad, what are the roles of each of the participants and what interactions occur between the participants?

Area 1 – Relational component

Area 2 – Developmental component

Area 3 – Contextual component

Interview Schedule
As it can be seen from Figure 4.18, the areas from Research Question 3 concern interactions, roles and how the triad mentoring relationship operates.

Area 1 - First year pre-service teachers
This area concerned the relational, developmental and contextual aspects of the triad model. It specifically investigated the first year pre-service teachers’ views about roles and interactions within the triad.

Area 2 - Final year pre-service teachers
This area concerned the relational, developmental and contextual aspects of the triad model. It specifically investigated the final year pre-service teachers’ views about the roles and interactions within the triad.

Area 3 - Mentor teachers
This area concerned the relational, developmental and contextual aspects of the triad model. It specifically investigated the mentor teachers’ views about the triad model, the roles undertaken by each participant and the interactions that occurred between the triad members.

Development of interview questions
In developing the interview questions, data gathered in the survey and observations were examined and considered in the formulation of the questions. Given the exploratory nature of this research and the multiple cases used, it was deemed necessary that each member in each of the participant groups was asked the same set of questions. Therefore interview questions were developed for three separate participant groups namely the first year pre-service teachers, the final year pre-service teachers and the mentor teachers. The question set for each of the three groups followed the same areas as described in Figure 4.18; however the questions were adapted to suit participant type. For instance, the questions asked of the mentor teachers and final year pre-service teachers focused on how they mentored, whereas the questions asked of the first year pre-service teachers focused on the mentoring they received.

In conjunction with the researcher’s supervisors, a pool of possible questions was listed under each area. According to Yin (2003) focussed interviews should be scheduled for
short periods of time, therefore it was decided that each interview should consists of approximately 10 questions as a starting point. Two questions from each area’s pool of questions were nominated, however other questions from the areas were also nominated as those that would provide extra data. It is important to note that the researcher also allowed for the asking of questions which were prompted by responses from the participants. These questions differed between participants. Questions were posed in an open ended format so that the researcher was able to follow up responses with further clarifying questions or prompts. Using Berg’s (2009) question classification, all three types of questions, as described below, were utilized.

- Essential questions were the same for each triad member.
- Throw away questions were generated at the time of the interview to establish rapport between the interviewer and the participant. The throw away questions varied with each participant.
- Probing questions, which were asked in order to clarify or expand on a participant’s response, were generated during the interview and varied between each participant.

**Preparation and description of the interview protocol**

The preliminary set of questions was discussed and modified as appropriate in consultation with the researcher’s supervisors. Table 4.8 summarises the number of questions used for interviews with each group of participants following the consultation.

**Table 4.8 Final interview schedule questions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Mentoring Components</th>
<th>Relational</th>
<th>Developmental</th>
<th>Contextual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Area 1:</strong> First year pre-service teachers</td>
<td></td>
<td>6 questions</td>
<td>3 questions</td>
<td>2 questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Area 2:</strong> Final year pre-service teachers</td>
<td></td>
<td>4 questions</td>
<td>3 questions</td>
<td>2 questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Area 3:</strong> Mentor Teachers</td>
<td></td>
<td>4 questions</td>
<td>4 questions</td>
<td>3 questions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The interview schedules used are in D.1, D.2 and D.3.
4.4.5 Administration of the instrument

The administration of the interview schedule followed three steps as can be seen from Figure 4.19.

*Figure 4.19 Administration process for the interview schedule*

*Interview sample*

The interviews were conducted individually with each member of the mentoring triads. The formation of the mentoring triads was outlined in Chapter 3.

*Interview schedule*

The interviews were scheduled at a time negotiated with each participant. It was intended that all interviews would be undertaken at the teaching school. However due to scheduled school holidays and the general busy nature of schools, this became very difficult to organise and schedule. Therefore the interviews with first year and final year pre-service teachers occurred at university in their final week of term. Interviews with mentor teachers were arranged and conducted during the first week of the new school term after the September/October school holidays. These interviews occurred at the school site and were conducted after school had concluded. Table 4.9 outlines the interview schedule.
Table 4.9 Interview schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Triad 1</th>
<th>Triad 2</th>
<th>Triad 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>First year</strong></td>
<td><strong>First year</strong></td>
<td><strong>First year</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 September 2009</td>
<td>22 September 2009</td>
<td>22 September 2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Final Year</strong></td>
<td><strong>Final Year</strong></td>
<td><strong>Final Year</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 September 2009</td>
<td>21 September 2009</td>
<td>21 September 2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mentor Teacher</strong></td>
<td><strong>Mentor Teacher</strong></td>
<td><strong>Mentor Teacher</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 October 2009</td>
<td>8 October 2009</td>
<td>7 October 2009</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Interview administration

In order to administer the interview questions with the participants, Neuman’s (1997) three stages of interviews was used as a rough guide. Neuman’s three stages are shown in Table 4.10.

Table 4.10 Administration of the interview schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage of Interview</th>
<th>Process</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Stage 1 – Introduction** | • Welcome and thank you for participating in the interview  
|                      | • Information about what the interview will focus on  
|                      | • Introductory question which focuses on asking the participant generally about the EPL experience |
| **Stage 2 - Main body** | • Asking of questions in the order outlined in the interview question sheets (Appendix D.1, D.2 and D.3) |
| **Stage 3 – Interview Exit** | • Final question which asks the participant to make any further comments  
|                      | • Thank the participant for their time and contribution  
|                      | • Explain that the interviews will be transcribed and that a copy (of their interview) will be available for the participant to view |

Each interview was digitally recorded with permission from each participant. Interviews were then transcribed as soon as possible after each interview. An example of an interview transcript can be seen in Appendix D.4.

4.5 Summary

This chapter has detailed the design, development and administration process for the data collection instruments namely the online survey, observations and interviews used for
Phase 1 and Phase 2 of this research. Chapters 5 and 6 present the results of the data collected using each of the three instruments.
Chapter 5
Online Survey Results – Phase 1

5.1 Introduction
Chapters 3 and 4 presented details of the research approach and data collection instruments respectively, that were used in this research. This chapter and the next present the results from the data collection procedures documented in Chapter 4. Specifically this chapter presents the Phase 1 results which address Research Questions 1 and 2 as follows.

- RQ1 – *What are the perceptions of pre-service teachers about mentoring?*
- RQ2 - *What mentoring experiences do pre-service teachers encounter during their professional placements?*

Phase 1 gathered data about first year pre-service teachers and final year pre-service teachers’ perceptions and experiences of mentoring through an online survey as shown in Appendices B.2 and B.3. The process used for the analysis of the data gathered is outlined in Chapter 3. Chapter 6 presents the Phase 2 results from the use of the observation and interview schedules.

The next section presents details of the demographics from the online survey. The remainder of the chapter presents the results for each of the online survey questions. The questions have been grouped into categories; therefore the results are presented according to the categories. The categories have been aligned with the themes used in the online survey format. Figure 5.1 aligns the survey categories with the research questions.
5.2 Demographics

It can be seen in Table 5.1 that of the seventy-five participants there was a spread of age groups, gender and programs for the first year and final year samples.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographics</th>
<th>First year (N=44)</th>
<th>Final year (N=31)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age (years)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 - 19</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 – 25</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 – 35</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36+</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Program</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Childhood</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary/VET</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 5.1 shows that the ages of the first year group were more diverse than the final year group. Sixty-two percent (62%) of the final year pre-service teachers were aged between 20-25 years. There were also more females than males in the sample. This sample typically parallels the female/male ratio in teacher education programs (House of Representatives, 2007). The table shows that the majority of respondents were enrolled in the primary and early childhood programs, with few pre-service teachers from the secondary program taking part in the survey.

As shown in Table 5.2, prior experiences of school and working with children were diversely spread amongst the two groups of respondents. It should be noted that the respondents were able to nominate multiple choices which described their experiences. However, it can be seen that more of the final year participants had experience with working with children and with school experiences than the first year participants.

Table 5.2 Respondent’s school and work experiences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experiences</th>
<th>First year (N=44)</th>
<th>Final year (N=31)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Prior school experiences</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My own schooling</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My children’s schooling</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working as a volunteer</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working in a paid position</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Prior experiences of working with children or adolescents</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher aide</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Childcare worker</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coach (sports team)</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructor (skills based)</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.3 Mentoring

This category had two sub-categories, mentoring perceptions and experiences. As shown in Table 5.3 there are seven questions about mentoring perceptions and eight questions about the pre-service teachers’ mentoring experiences. The sections that follow present the results for each of the questions for mentoring perceptions and experiences.
### Table 5.3 Survey questions which concern mentoring perceptions and experiences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Questions</th>
<th>Mentoring Perceptions</th>
<th>Mentoring Experiences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Q1</strong> - What does mentoring mean to you?</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Q5</strong> - In your EPL experiences, who has mentored you?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Q2</strong> - In the context of EPL, what aspect of mentoring is most important to you?</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Q6</strong> - What do you hope to achieve from your EPL experiences?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Q3</strong> - To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about your EPL experiences and your mentor teacher?</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Q7</strong> - Generally, what types of mentoring conversations occur between you and your mentor teacher?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Q4</strong> - Thinking back to each of your EPL experiences, do you think that you have been mentored or supervised? (Final year only)</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Q8</strong> - When do the mentoring conversations take place between you and your mentor teacher during EPL?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Q5</strong> - In your EPL experiences, who has mentored you?</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Q9</strong> - Who initiates the mentoring conversations?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Q6</strong> - What do you hope to achieve from your EPL experiences?</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Q10</strong> - What communication methods are used in the mentoring conversations with your mentor teacher?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 5.3.1 Mentoring Perceptions

#### Q1 – What does mentoring mean to you?

Three groupings of results emerged from the data namely that mentoring concerns guiding and supporting the mentee, learning by the mentee and working with an experienced person.

Mentoring concerns guiding and supporting

Sixty percent (60%) of the first year group and seventy percent (70%) of the final year group’s responses contained descriptive words which indicated that mentoring concern guiding and supporting. The following statements are typical of the responses made by the two groups about this concept.

- *Getting alongside someone who is entering the same occupation and helping them along.*  
  - First year respondent

- *Being a support and offer encouragement.*  
  - First year respondent

- *Someone who provides feedback, support and encouragement, guidance and knowledge.*  
  - Final year respondent

Mentoring concerns learning by the mentee

Fifteen percent (15%) of the first year group and twelve percent (12%) of the final year group referred to learning in their responses. However the responses also indicated that
this is a supportive guided process rather than a direct teaching and learning process. The following statements from the two groups highlight the guided learning process and these are typical of responses.

*Guiding learning. It's not like being told this and that, you actually get to listen to the experience of others and make your own knowledge and understandings.* First year respondent

*When someone guides someone else through an aspect of learning through experience.* Final year respondent

Mentoring is working with an experienced person
Twenty-five percent (25%) of the first year group and 10% of the final year group indicated that mentoring involves working with a more experienced person. The following responses to the question ‘what does mentoring mean to you’ highlight how the students typify an experienced person.

*Helping, being there for someone else. Someone to look up to. Someone who has a lot of experience in a particular area.* First year respondent

*A supportive role model that will guide you through your learning journey.* Final year respondent

Q2 - *In the context of EPL, what aspect of mentoring is most important to you?*

The question contained a list of mentoring aspects from which to choose. Respondents were asked to choose one aspect which was most important to them. As can be seen in Figure 5.2, first year and final year groups nominated different aspects as being important.
Twenty-five percent (25%) of the first year group nominated *guide* as being most important whereas the 35% of the final year group nominated *constructive feedback*. *Role model* was also an important aspect for the first year group with 23% nominating this aspect, whereas 10% of the final year group chose this aspect as important. Twenty-three percent (23%) of the final year group nominated *support* as an important aspect compared to 14% of the first year group.
Q3 - To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about your EPL experiences and your mentor teacher?

This question required the respondents to rate each statement using a Likert scale as shown in Table 5.4. As can be seen in the table below, the ‘strongly disagree’ column has not been included due to no responses being recorded. However, it can be seen that the majority of the respondents agree or strongly agree with the statements, with few respondents remaining neutral or disagreeing.

It is evident from the table that both the first year and final year groups agreed with each of the statements. Responses were very similar except for the items *I have had ample opportunities to become involved in the routines of the classroom and to practise teach* and *I was encouraged to reflect by my mentor teacher*. As expected it can be seen from Table 5.4 that more of the final year group than the first year group strongly agreed with these items. The last two statements only completed by the final year group, indicated a high level of agreement.

The following results can also be seen from Table 5.4:
Sixty-four percent (64%) of the first year group and 68% of the final year group strongly agreed that they were welcomed into the classroom by the mentor teacher.

Fifty percent (50%) of the first year group and 57% of the final year group strongly agreed that the MT provided opportunities for me to complete the assigned portal tasks.

Seventy-four percent (74%) of the final year group strongly agreed that they had ample opportunities to become involved in the routines of the classroom and to practise teach whilst 50% of the first year group agreed that their professional development needs were met in the classroom.

Thirty-six percent (36%) of the first year group and 16% of the final year group neither agreed nor disagreed about being encouraged to reflect by their mentor teacher, while 9% and 10% respectively disagreed with this statement.
Table 5.4 Rating of statements by the mentee about EPL experiences and of mentor teachers (n=75)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category response</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neither agree or disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Group</td>
<td>Group</td>
<td>Group</td>
<td>Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>First Year</td>
<td>Final Year</td>
<td>First Year</td>
<td>Final Year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I was welcomed into the classroom by my MT (Mentor teacher)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The MT provided opportunities for me to complete the assigned portal tasks</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have had ample opportunities to become involved in the routines of the classroom and to practise teach</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My professional development needs were met in my host classroom</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I was given constructive feedback by my MT</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I was encouraged to reflect by my MT</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I was encouraged to take risks and try new teaching strategies out</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I had the freedom to be the type of learning manager I want to be</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Q4 - Thinking back to each of your EPL experiences, do you think that you have been mentored or supervised?**

The final year group were asked about their perceptions of their overall experiences throughout their degree. Table 5.5 shows that the final year group perceived that they were mainly *mentored* in each EPL, with a small percentage perceiving that they were *supervised* and a smaller percentage that they received neither mentoring or supervision.

*Table 5.5 Final year pre-service teachers mentoring and supervision experiences (n=31)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Mentored</th>
<th>Supervised</th>
<th>Neither</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First year EPL</td>
<td>17 (55%)</td>
<td>10 (32%)</td>
<td>4 (13%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second year EPL</td>
<td>21 (68%)</td>
<td>7 (22%)</td>
<td>3 (10%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final year EPL</td>
<td>24 (77%)</td>
<td>4 (13%)</td>
<td>3 (10%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**5.3.2 Mentoring Experiences**

**Q5 – In your EPL experiences, who has mentored you?**

This question asked both groups about who had mentored them during their EPL experiences. Respondents were able to choose as many responses as appropriate. It can be seen from Figure 5.3 that 93% of the first year group and 90% of the final year group nominated their *mentor teacher* as one who had mentored them. The final year group also nominated *another teacher* (60%), *another BLM student* (57%) and the *Lead Learning Manager* (53%). Forty-four percent (44%) of the first year group also nominated *the university coordinator* as one who had mentored them.
Q6 - What do you hope to achieve from your EPL experiences?

Three groupings of results emerged from the analysis of the data from the first year and final year groups namely confidence, a variety of experiences and knowledge about how to be a teacher.

Confidence

Thirty-one percent (31%) of the first year group and 41% of the final year group expressed that they wanted to gain confidence from their EPL experiences. The following statements are typical of the responses.

Confidence to act as myself in front of the class, but also to be professional and have that respect as an authority figure. Getting that healthy balance between fun and firm. First year respondent

Confidence in my ability as a teacher. Final year respondent

A variety of experiences

Both groups expressed that they would like to experience a variety of teaching experiences and opportunities to learn new teaching skills. Thirty-one percent (31%) of the first year group and 19% of the final year group indicated this as seen in the following example statements.
Experience, both good and bad. That way I can have a better understanding of what works and what doesn’t in a classroom. First year respondent

Many strategies and experiences, how to reflect on your own practice. Final year respondent

Knowledge about how to be a teacher
Forty-three percent (43%) of the first year group and 35% of the final year group stated that they wanted to gain knowledge about how to be a teacher. This result also included knowledge about planning, classroom management, having a bank of teaching strategies and so forth. The following statements are typical of both groups’ responses to the question.

Better understanding of what is involved with the teaching side of education. The planning, scaffolding and achieving outcomes. First year respondent

A greater and more specific knowledge of the reality of being a full time teacher. Final year respondent

Q7 - Generally, what types of mentoring conversations occur between you and your mentor teacher?
This question concerned the topics of conversations which occur between the mentor teacher and the mentee. A list of topics was provided and respondents were asked to choose as many responses as appropriate. As can be seen in Figure 5.4 each group nominated different topics. The highest frequency of type of conversation by the first year group concerned the learners (95%), specific tasks to do (89%), teaching strategies (82%) reflection (80%), specific tasks performed (77%) and the work of a teacher (73%). The final year group nominated similar conversations such as teaching strategies (74%), specific tasks performed (74%), the learners 68%) and reflections (65%).
Figure 5.4 Mentoring conversations between the mentor and the mentee (n=75)

Q8 - When do the mentoring conversations take place between you and your mentor teacher during EPL?

The two groups of respondents were asked to rate how often mentoring conversations occurred. Specifically, this question asked about the types of conversations that occurred as well as where or when they occurred. A list of types of conversations was provided which included a description about where or when the conversation occurred. Table 5.6 shows that respondents in both groups indicated that all types of conversations occurred at least once per day.
Table 5.6 Types and frequency of conversations between mentors and mentees (n=75)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of conversations and when they occur</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Once per day</th>
<th>Twice daily</th>
<th>3 times per day</th>
<th>More than 4 times per day</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Group</td>
<td>Group</td>
<td>Group</td>
<td>Group</td>
<td>Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>First Year</td>
<td>Final Year</td>
<td>First Year</td>
<td>Final Year</td>
<td>First Year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>n</strong></td>
<td><strong>%</strong></td>
<td><strong>n</strong></td>
<td><strong>%</strong></td>
<td><strong>n</strong></td>
<td><strong>%</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ad hoc conversations during class time</td>
<td>3 7</td>
<td>8 26</td>
<td>8 19</td>
<td>12 39</td>
<td>9 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informal conversations at lunch time</td>
<td>1 2</td>
<td>4 13</td>
<td>17 39</td>
<td>16 52</td>
<td>17 39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>During playground duty or bus duty</td>
<td>7 16</td>
<td>8 26</td>
<td>23 52</td>
<td>14 45</td>
<td>7 16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planned or designated individual conversations at a specific time</td>
<td>9 21</td>
<td>5 17</td>
<td>22 51</td>
<td>11 37</td>
<td>9 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Before and/or after tasks have been performed</td>
<td>2 5</td>
<td>4 13</td>
<td>15 34</td>
<td>9 29</td>
<td>11 25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Q9- Who initiates the mentoring conversations?

Question 12 asked respondents to indicate who initiates mentoring conversations and how often that person initiated the conversations. It can be seen from Table 5.7 that the mentor teacher and both groups each regularly initiated the mentoring conversations. However, the results indicate that the mentor teachers regularly initiated conversations more frequently than the mentee.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category response</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Regularly</th>
<th>Much</th>
<th>Extensively</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Group</td>
<td>Group</td>
<td>Group</td>
<td>Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>First</td>
<td>Final</td>
<td>First</td>
<td>Final</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Myself</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentor teacher</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q 10- What communication methods are used in the mentoring conversations with your mentor teacher?

Figure 5.5 presents the results of the communication methods used by mentor teachers and pre-service teachers when engaging in mentoring conversations. The pre-service teachers were asked to indicate all communication methods used. One hundred percent (100%) of the first year and final year groups indicated that they meet face to face at school to engage in mentoring conversations. Only a small percentage of both groups meet face to face elsewhere. Communication by email was a mode used by 57% of the first year group and 55% of the final year group. Forty-five percent (45%) of the final year group communicated with their mentor teacher by phone.
5.4 Mentoring Relationships

This theme contains two questions which concern perceptions of mentoring relationships and one question about experiences of mentoring relationships as shown in Table 5.8.

**Table 5.8 Questions concerning perceptions and experiences of mentoring relationships**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Questions</th>
<th>Mentoring Relationship Perceptions</th>
<th>Mentoring Relationship Experiences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Q11</strong> - Describe your ideal mentoring relationship.</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Q13</strong> - During your final year EPL experiences, did your relationship change as time evolved? (Final year only)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Q12</strong> - The research literature about mentoring discusses the matching of mentors and mentees. Matching includes the consideration of age, gender, experiences, interests etc. What do you think is important when matching a mentor and mentee? (Final year only)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.4.1 Perceptions of mentoring relationships

**Q11 - Describe your ideal mentoring relationship.**

Analysis of the responses has identified five groupings of results. These groupings indicate how the first year and final year groups perceive mentoring relationships. Mentoring relationships should be friendly, yet professional.
A similar percentage of the first year and final year groups indicated that a mentoring relationship should be friendly, but professional. Twenty three percent (23%) of the first year group and twenty-five percent (25%) of the final year group responded this way.

*We would get along really well together and be comfortable around each other. Most of all I would like to be friends with my mentor teacher.* First year respondent

*Friendly, but professional when appropriate.* Final year respondent

Mentoring relationships should be supportive
A supportive mentoring relationship was identified by both the first year and final year groups. Thirty-seven percent (37%) of the first year group articulated that mentoring relationships should be supportive. Twenty-five percent (25%) of the final year group also articulated this.

*One without judgement, one with understanding that I am learning and will need time to learn. One in which I feel comfortable to ask even the silliest of questions.* First year respondent

*Supportive, encouraging and understanding, someone who guides me and supports risk taking in my approach to teaching.* Final year respondent

Mentoring relationships should have open communication
Communication was identified by some respondents as being part of an ideal mentoring relationship. In this instance responses coded as open communication related to having both time and opportunity for talk. In this respect, 21% of the first year group and 7% of the final year group indicated that open communication was part of an ideal mentoring relationship. The following examples are typical of the responses made about open communication.

*Communication is probably the most important thing in an ideal mentoring relationship. To be comfortable asking questions and that the mentor is approachable.* First year respondent
Mentoring relationships should be collaborative and encourage teamwork

Eleven percent (11%) of the final year group indicated that a collaborative relationship was part of their ideal mentoring relationship. The final year group used such descriptors as collaborative, partnership and equals. Eight percent (8%) of the first year group indicated a similar response, however the first year group used descriptive terms such as working with someone and working together. The following examples demonstrate the responses made.

\textit{A feeling of working 'with' someone, being accepted where I am and being guided to grow.}  
First year respondent

\textit{One where we become equals, and share ideas and strategies – we work together towards a common goal.}  Final year respondent

Mentoring relationships should include constructive feedback

The provision of constructive feedback was indicated in 21% of responses from the first year group and 15% from the final year group. Constructive feedback is often considered as a learning tool that assists a pre-service teacher to develop and improve their teaching skills.

\textit{The mentor teacher will allow for the student to become involved, but will offer feedback and suggestions for improvement.}  First year respondent

\textit{The mentor guides and gives lots of constructive feedback which is a balance of positive and negative.}  Final year respondent
Q12- The research literature about mentoring discusses the matching of mentors and mentees. Matching includes the consideration of age, gender, experiences, interests etc. What do you think is important when matching a mentor and mentee?

Question 12 was only directed to the final year group as they had engaged in more than one EPL experience. Three groupings of results emerged from the open ended responses, those being personality, having an open classroom and age, experience and interests.

Personality

Thirty percent (30%) indicated that having similar personalities was an important factor in matching mentors and mentees.

*My mentor and I had none of these in common, but we were a great match, our personalities were the same, humorous, enthusiastic and fun.* Final year respondent

Request a pre-service teacher

The final year group indicated that the mentor teacher needed to be open and want to have a pre-service teacher in their classroom. Twenty percent (20%) indicated this.

*Ensure that the mentor teacher really wants you there to help you to learn, not for the extra hand or money.* Final year respondent

Age, experience and interests

Twenty-eight percent (28%) of the final year group indicated that age, experience and having common interests were considerations when matching mentors and mentees. The final year group did not indicate whether the ages of the mentors and mentees should be similar or not.

*Personal and professional common interests as well as experience.* Final year respondent
5.4.2 Experiences of mentoring relationships

Q13 - During your final year EPL experiences, did your relationship change as time evolved?

This question was only asked of the final year group. A list of scenarios was provided and the final year group was asked to choose as many responses as appropriate to their situation.

It can be seen from Figure 5.6 that 43% of the final year group indicated that the relationship evolved into one which became cooperative and the mentor teacher and pre-service teacher worked together as a team. Thirty-four percent (34%) of respondents indicated that the relationship changed, with pre-service teachers taking on the teachers’ role and mentor teachers becoming the assistants. Four percent (4%) of respondents indicated that the relationship did not change and 8% indicated that they were still treated as the pre-service teacher.

5.5 Mentoring Roles

This category contains three questions which specifically ask about mentoring roles in a mentoring relationship as shown in Table 5.9.
Table 5.9 Questions which concern perceptions and experiences of mentoring roles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Questions</th>
<th>Perceptions of Mentoring Roles</th>
<th>Experiences of Mentoring Roles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q14</td>
<td>What are your roles in the relationship?</td>
<td>Q15 - To what extent do the following descriptors describe your mentor teacher?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q15</td>
<td></td>
<td>Q16 - In terms of the mentoring definition provided, in what ways have you been mentored by your mentor teacher?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.5.1 Perceptions of mentoring roles

**Q14 - What are your roles in the relationship?**

This question asked the first year and final year groups to outline their roles in a mentoring relationship. Analysis of the responses identified three groups of results.

**Be proactive in and contribute to the relationship**  
Forty-four percent (44%) of the first year group and 22% of the final year group indicated that their role in the relationship was to be proactive and contribute to the relationship. The responses included such descriptors as *to help*, *be involved*, *actively participate* and *to share*.

The following examples are typical responses.

> To actively participate in the classroom, to seek instruction and clarification when necessary, to share my observations about students, to take initiative in developing and fulfilling a range of learning tasks for the students. First year respondent

> Willing to share knowledge and ideas, accept feedback and contribute equally. Final year respondent

**Learning and reflecting**

Learning and reflecting as a role was identified by 60% of the final year group and 20% of the first year group respectively. The first year group placed an emphasis on learning how to teach, whereas the final year group implied that their learning was focused on strengthening their teaching as shown in the example responses.

> To ask for feedback and advice where needed. To watch, listen, question, push myself, reflect on what worked and what didn’t and improve next time. First year respondent
To listen, take advice and make suggestions. Final year respondent

Listening and doing
Twenty-four percent (24%) of the first year group and 18% of the final year group indicated that listening to the mentor teacher and then implementing suggestions and advice was a role. The following examples are typical of the responses provided by the pre-service teachers.

Be guided, listen to advice and suggestions and then take steps to put them into practice. 
First year respondent

Listen, reflect, implement and apply feedback to practice. Final year respondent

5.5.2 Experience of mentoring roles

Q15 - To what extent do the following descriptors describe your mentor teacher?

In this question, the first year and final year groups were provided a list of descriptors of mentors and were asked to rate each descriptor in relation to their own mentor teacher. As can be seen in Table 5.10, 47% of the first year group and 52% of the final year group rated role model in the ‘extremely’ category.

Except for role model, the first year and final year groups rated the descriptions differently. Forty-four percent (44%) of the first year group rated co-enquirer as a ‘regular’ description of the mentor teacher. Forty percent (40%) of the first year group also rated coach in the ‘much’ category. Fifty-eight percent (58%) of the final year group rated colleague in the ‘extremely’ category along with 45% for the description of friend. Forty percent (40%) of the final year group ‘regularly’ rated assessor as a description.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Descriptor</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Regularly</th>
<th>Much</th>
<th>Extremely</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>First Year</td>
<td>Final Year</td>
<td>First Year</td>
<td>Final Year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervisor</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical friend</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role model</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coach</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co-enquirer</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructor</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guide</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessor</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advisor</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colleague</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friend</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.10 Mentor teacher descriptors by mentees (n=75)
Q 16 - *In terms of the mentoring definition provided, in what ways have you been mentored by your mentor teacher?*

This question asked the first year and final year groups about how they had been mentored by their mentor teacher. The respondents were provided with a list of descriptors and were able to choose as many of the descriptors as appropriate. It can be seen from Figure 5.7 that there are specific differences between the mentoring definitions the mentor teachers used for each group. Ninety-one percent (91%) of the first year group nominated *modelled effective teaching behaviours* and *advised me* and 86% percent nominated *guided me* and *helped me*. Ninety percent (90%) of the final year group nominated *guided me*, 84% percent nominated *provided me with feedback* and 81% nominated *directed me*, *supported me* and *advised me*.

**Figure 5.7 Comparison of first year and final year mentoring by mentor teachers**

(n=75)

5.6 Peer Mentoring

This category contains five questions which examined perceptions and experiences of peer mentoring for the first year and final groups as shown in Table 5.11.
Table 5.11 Questions which concern perceptions and experiences of peer mentoring

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Peer Mentoring Perceptions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Q17</strong> - How would you describe the other BLM student in regards to the EPL experience? <em>(1st year only)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Q18</strong> - How would you describe the other BLM student that you share your mentor teacher with? <em>(1st year only)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Q19</strong> - Describe the interactions that you have in your EPL with the other BLM student. <em>(1st yr only)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Q20</strong> - How important was it to have a group of first year/final year BLM students at your Teaching School?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Q21</strong> - In your opinion, what would the benefits of having another BLM student in the same classroom as you?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Q22</strong> - In your opinion, what would the limitations of having another BLM student in the same classroom as you?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Q23</strong> - In your opinion, do you think you would be a mentor to the first year student along with the mentor teacher? If so, what roles would you perform?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.6.1 Peer mentoring perceptions

**Q17 - How would you describe the other BLM student in regards to the EPL experience?**

This question was only asked of the first year group who shared their mentor teacher with another BLM student. From the group of forty-four first year pre-service teachers, eight indicated that they shared their mentor with another BLM student. The survey instrument provided a list of descriptors from which the pre-service teachers could choose as many which were appropriate. It can be seen from Figure 5.10 that *supportive* and *obliging* (35%) were the descriptors most used to describe the other BLM student. However *critical friend* (15%) and *competition* (10%) were also selected.
Figure 5.8 Descriptions used by the first year group about other BLM students during the EPL experience (n=44)

Q18 - How would you describe the other BLM student that you share your mentor teacher with?

This question only applied to the respondents who answered Q4. The respondents were able to choose as many descriptors as appropriate.

As can be seen in Figure 5.9, friend and colleague were chosen by 26% of respondents. Twenty-one percent (21%) chose co-enquirer, however none of the respondents chose role model, supervisor or coach.

Figure 5.9 Descriptions used to describe other BLM students (n=44)
**Q19 - Describe the interactions that you have in your EPL with the other BLM student.**

As in Q4 and Q5, this question only applied to the respondents who indicated that they shared their mentor teacher with another BLM student. Two topics emerged from their responses – collaboration and the class and its learners.

**Collaboration**

Seven respondents included phrases such as *working together, sharing ideas* and *helping each other*, therefore implying that they engage in collaborative interactions.

**The class and the learners**

Four respondents indicated that interactions included discussion about the learners in the classroom, how they could *assist in the classroom* and how they would *help the mentor teacher*.

**Q20 - How important was it to have a group of first year/final year BLM students at your Teaching School?**

This question asked about perceptions regarding being placed at a teaching school with a group of other BLM students. As it can be seen in Figure 5.10, 50% of the final year group and 39% of the first year group rated it as *essential*. More of the first year group (34%) rated it as *important* than the final year group (27%), however 27% of the first year group and 23% of the final year group rated it as *not important* at all.
Figure 5.10 Importance of having a group of BLM students at a Teaching School (n=75)

Q21 - In your opinion, what would the benefits of having another BLM student in the same classroom as you?

This question asked the first year and final year groups to consider the benefits of having another BLM student in the same classroom as them. Four groupings of results emerged from the analysis; one of which applied only to final year pre-service teachers’ responses.

No benefit

A small selection of the first year and final year groups responded that there would be no benefit from having another student in the same classroom, however more of the final year group (35%) than the first year group (5%) responded in this way.

Support mechanism

Sixty-eight percent (68%) of the first year group indicated that having another BLM student would provide a support mechanism that would help them to achieve their goals. The first year group used such descriptors as support, help me and act as a sounding board. Six percent (6%) of the final year group indicated that they would be a support mechanism. The following examples of descriptions are typical of each group’s responses.
Having someone who was doing similar activities and knew the classroom that you are in. Able to use them as a sounding board for ideas etc. They would understand the routine of the classroom and the students. First year respondent

Would be supportive, help provide guidance, lesson planning, encouragement. Final year respondent

Collaborative relationship
More of the first year group than the final year group indicated that a benefit of having another BLM student in the same classroom was the opportunity for a collaborative relationship to develop. Eighteen percent (18%) of the first year group and 3% of the final year group indicated this. The responses made by each group included descriptions such as working with someone, sharing ideas and partner teaching. The following are examples of responses.

We could bounce ideas off each other. We could also communicate our findings and knowledge with each other in regards to the learners and/or classroom activities. First year respondent

Sharing knowledge is more educational rather than just learning it. Final year respondent

Become a mentor
This grouping only emerged from the final year group’s responses. Twenty-six percent (26%) of final year group indicated that they would become a mentor for the other BLM student.

You would be able to see how far you’ve come. Be a mentor yourself to a first year and step up your own professional teaching. Final year respondent

Q22 - In your opinion, what would the limitations of having another BLM student in the same classroom as you?
This question addressed the possible limitations of there being another BLM student in the same classroom. Four groupings of results emerged, namely less teaching time, less time
with the mentor teacher, limited opportunities to develop teaching skills and emergence of a competitive environment.

Less teaching time
A similar percentage between the first year and final year groups indicated that there would be less time for their own teaching if there was another BLM student in the same classroom. Thirty-two percent (32%) of the first year group and 38% of the final year group thought this.

Less time with the mentor teacher
More of the first year group than the final year group identified that there would be less time to speak with the mentor teacher if there was another BLM student in the same classroom. Twenty-seven percent (27%) of the first year group indicated this along with 13% of the final year group.

Limited opportunities to develop teaching skills
Eighteen percent (18%) of the first year group indicated that they would have less opportunity to develop their skills in the classroom if there was another BLM student in the same classroom as. Ten percent (10%) of the final year group also indicated this.

Emergence of a competitive environment
More of the first year group than the final year group identified that having another BLM student in the same classroom would induce a competitive atmosphere in the classroom and between the two pre-service teachers. Thirty-six percent (36%) of the first year group and 16% of the final year group indicated this in their responses.

Q23 - In your opinion, do you think you would be a mentor to the first year student along with the mentor teacher? If so, what roles would you perform?

This question was only asked of the final year group; and the respondents were able to choose as many responses as appropriate. It can be seen from Figure 5.11 that 2% responded that they would not be a mentor to a first year. However 12% indicated that they would encourage them, support them, answer their questions, be a role model, direct them to resources and give them feedback. Eleven percent (11%) indicated that they would nurture them, 9% would give them advice and 6% would instruct them.
5.6.2 Peer mentoring experiences

**Q24 - Do you share your mentor teacher with another student teacher?**

This question was only asked of the first year group. As seen in Figure 5.12, 79% of the first year group indicated that they did not share their mentor teacher with another pre-service teacher. However 19% indicated that they shared their mentor teacher with another first year student and 5% with a pre-service teacher from another university. This question was a pre-cursor to Q 17, 18 and 19. Students who indicated that they shared their mentor teacher with another BLM student were then required to complete questions that concerned conversations and interactions that occurred with the other pre-service teacher.
**Figure 5.12 Sharing the mentor teacher with another pre-service teacher (n=44)**

![Pie chart showing distribution of students sharing mentor teacher with another pre-service teacher](chart.png)

- 77% No other student
- 18% First year BLM student
- 5% Second year BLM student
- 2% Final year BLM student
- 2% Student from another University

**Q25 - What topics form the basis of conversations had with the other BLM student in your host class?**

Similar to Q24, this question was only asked of the first year group who shared their mentor teacher with another BLM student. The first year group was provided with a list of conversation topics and were asked to choose as many responses as appropriate. As shown in Figure 5.13, 19% of the first year group indicated that *university work* and *EPL tasks* were conversation topics. Seventeen percent (17%) indicated that they talked about the *mentor teacher* and 17% also indicated that the conversations were of a *non-specific nature*. Six percent (6%) provided *career advice* and 11% talked about the *learners* in the classroom as well as giving *developmental advice*.

**Figure 5.13 Conversation topics between the mentor and mentee (n=8)**

![Pie chart showing distribution of conversation topics](chart2.png)

- 19% University work
- 19% EPL
- 17% Career advice
- 17% Developmental advice
- 11% Students in host classroom
- 11% Mentor teacher
- 6% Non-specific conversations
**Q26 - How have the other first year/final year BLM students at your teaching school assisted you?**

This question asked the first year and final year groups to identify how other BLM students had assisted them whilst they were at their teaching schools. They were asked to choose as many responses as appropriate.

As can be seen in Figure 5.14 the first year and final year groups nominated *clarified tasks* highly. Sixty-three percent (63%) of the first year group and 77% of the final year group did so. The category *were a sounding board for ideas and thoughts* also rated highly as 53% of the first year group and 58% of the final year group nominated this category. *Gave me ideas and thoughts about lessons* was nominated by 49% of the first year group and 54% of the final year group. Fifty-eight percent (58%) of the final year group nominated *helped me to celebrate*, and 40% of the first year group nominated this category. Twenty-six percent (26%) of the first year group and 15% of the final year group indicated that they received *no assistance at all* from the other BLM students at their teaching school.

**Figure 5.14 Assistance from other BLM students at the teaching school (n=75)**
5.7 Comparative analysis of survey data

A comparative analysis for data obtained from both the first year and final year groups for five questions, as shown in Table 5.12, concerning mentoring perceptions and experiences establishes possible differences between the two groups.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions comparatively analysed</th>
<th>Perceptions</th>
<th>Experiences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q3</td>
<td>To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about your EPL experiences and your mentor teacher?</td>
<td>Q8 - When do mentoring conversations take place between you and your mentor teacher during EPL?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q20</td>
<td>How important was it to have a group of BLM students at your teaching school?</td>
<td>Q9 - Who initiates the mentoring conversations?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Q15 - To what extent do the following descriptors describe your mentor teacher?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The analysis procedure undertaken has been detailed in Chapter 3.

Q3 - To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about your EPL experiences and your mentor teacher?

It can be seen from Table 5.13 that there were no significant differences regarding aspects of the EPL experience between the first year and final year groups.
Table 5.13 Test of statements used by first and final year pre-service teachers about their experiences and mentor teachers (n=75)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experiences</th>
<th>First year group</th>
<th>Final year group</th>
<th>Significance Value t-test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I was welcomed into the classroom by my MT</td>
<td>4.55 ± 0.69</td>
<td>4.58 ± 0.67</td>
<td>0.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The MT provided opportunities for me to complete the assigned portal tasks</td>
<td>4.36 ± 0.75</td>
<td>4.40 ± 0.81</td>
<td>0.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have had ample opportunities to become involved in the routines of the classroom</td>
<td>4.32 ± 0.74</td>
<td>4.68 ± 0.65</td>
<td>0.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My professional development needs were met in my host classroom</td>
<td>4.18 ± 0.69</td>
<td>4.10 ± 0.92</td>
<td>0.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I was given constructive feedback by my MT</td>
<td>4.11 ± 0.81</td>
<td>4.26 ± 0.93</td>
<td>0.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I was encouraged to reflect by my MT</td>
<td>3.55 ± 1.08</td>
<td>4.06 ± 1.00</td>
<td>0.37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q8 - When do mentoring conversations take place between you and your mentor teacher during EPL?

Table 5.14 shows that there is a significant difference between the first and final year group of ad hoc conversations and planned conversations with the mentor teacher. It appears that such conversations occur more than other conversation types.
### Table 5.14 Test of types of conversations and when they occur (n=75)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conversations</th>
<th>First year group</th>
<th></th>
<th>Final year group</th>
<th></th>
<th>Significance Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Standard Deviation</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Standard Deviation</td>
<td>t-test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ad hoc conversations during class time</td>
<td>3.43</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>2.42</td>
<td>1.28</td>
<td>0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informal conversations at lunch time</td>
<td>2.86</td>
<td>0.97</td>
<td>2.52</td>
<td>1.15</td>
<td>0.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>During playground duty or bus duty</td>
<td>2.43</td>
<td>1.16</td>
<td>2.23</td>
<td>1.11</td>
<td>0.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planned or designated individual conversations at a specific time</td>
<td>2.16</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td>2.73</td>
<td>1.33</td>
<td>0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Before and/or after tasks have been performed</td>
<td>3.02</td>
<td>1.08</td>
<td>2.97</td>
<td>1.30</td>
<td>0.85</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Q9 - Who initiates the mentoring conversations?**

It can be seen from Table 5.15 that the comparative analysis of the data from Question 9 shows that there is no significant difference between the first year and final year groups regarding the initiation of mentoring conversations.

### Table 5.15 Test of who initiates the mentoring conversations (n=75)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Who</th>
<th>First year group</th>
<th></th>
<th>Final year group</th>
<th></th>
<th>Significance Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Standard Deviation</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Standard Deviation</td>
<td>t-test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Myself</td>
<td>3.65</td>
<td>0.92</td>
<td>3.39</td>
<td>0.90</td>
<td>0.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentor Teacher</td>
<td>2.98</td>
<td>0.98</td>
<td>3.13</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>0.47</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Q15 - To what extent do the following descriptors describe your mentor teacher?**

It can be seen from Table 5.16, that there were statistically significant differences between the first and final year groups for critical friend, colleague and to a lesser extent co-enquirer. In these instances the final year group used these descriptors emphatically. That is the final year group more often described their mentor as a critical friend than the first year group.
Table 5.16 Test of descriptors used by first and final year pre-service teachers about their mentor teachers (n=75)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mentor teacher descriptions</th>
<th>First year group</th>
<th>Final year group</th>
<th>Significance Value t-test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Standard Deviation</td>
<td>Mean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervisor</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>1.01</td>
<td>3.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical friend</td>
<td>3.02</td>
<td>1.12</td>
<td>3.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role model</td>
<td>4.16</td>
<td>0.94</td>
<td>4.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coach</td>
<td>3.77</td>
<td>1.06</td>
<td>3.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co-enquirer</td>
<td>2.88</td>
<td>0.95</td>
<td>3.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructor</td>
<td>3.30</td>
<td>1.08</td>
<td>3.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guide</td>
<td>3.91</td>
<td>0.99</td>
<td>3.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessor</td>
<td>3.36</td>
<td>1.14</td>
<td>3.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advisor</td>
<td>3.88</td>
<td>1.02</td>
<td>3.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colleague</td>
<td>3.51</td>
<td>1.03</td>
<td>4.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friend</td>
<td>3.21</td>
<td>1.24</td>
<td>3.90</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q20 - How important was it to have a group of BLM students at your teaching school?

It can be seen from Table 5.17 that there wasn’t any significant difference between the first year and final year groups rating of the importance of having a group of BLM students at the same teaching school.

Table 5.17 Test of importance of having a group of BLM students at the teaching school (n=75)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Importance of having a group of BLM students</th>
<th>First year group</th>
<th>Final year group</th>
<th>Significance Value t-test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Standard Deviation</td>
<td>Mean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Importance of having a group of BLM students</td>
<td>2.11</td>
<td>0.81</td>
<td>2.27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.8 Summary

This chapter has presented the results obtained through the analysis of the online survey data. Table 5.18 presents a summary of the results presented in each category.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mentoring Perceptions</strong></td>
<td>There were similarities and differences between the first year and final year groups regarding mentoring perceptions. There were no significant differences between the first year and final year groups regarding important aspects of mentoring.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Experiences</strong></td>
<td>Both first year and final year groups have had similar experiences with mentoring generally. There were significant differences between the two groups regarding the types of conversations that occurred however there were no significant differences in the initiation of mentoring conversations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mentoring Relationships Perceptions</strong></td>
<td>The first year group and the final year group had similar perceptions of mentoring relationships, however each group placed a different emphasis on aspects of the mentoring relationships.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Experiences</strong></td>
<td>The majority of the final year group indicated that their mentoring relationships change over time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mentoring Roles Perceptions</strong></td>
<td>The first year and final year groups identified similar mentee roles, however there was a difference in the percentage of responses from each group regarding the identified roles.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Experiences</strong></td>
<td>Emphasis on mentor roles and descriptions varied significantly between the first year group and final year group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Peer Mentoring Perceptions</strong></td>
<td>The perceptions of both groups of pre-service teachers regarding peer mentoring was generally positive despite both groups identifying disadvantages in peer mentoring. More of the first year group however responded positively to the concept of peer mentoring. There were no significant differences regarding the importance of having a group of BLM students at the same teaching school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Experiences</strong></td>
<td>Similar results were presented for the first year and final year groups regarding the assistance they received from other BLM students. However in all instances more of the final year group than the first year group nominated each aspect.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results presented in this chapter, along with the results presented in Chapter 6 will form the basis of a detailed discussion of the results in Chapter 7.
Chapter 6
Observation and Interview Results – Phase 2

6.1 Introduction
The previous chapter presented the results of Phase 1 of the research. This chapter presents the Phase 2 results which address Research Question 3 as is follows.

RQ3 In the context of a mentoring triad, what are the roles of each of the participants and what interactions occur between the participants?

As outlined in Chapter 3, Phase 2 of the research firstly involved observing the mentoring triads in action and was followed sequentially with interviews of each member of the triad. Therefore the first part of this chapter presents gathered observation data for the mentoring triads in action and the remainder of this chapter then presents the results of the individual interviews with each triad member.

6.2 Observation Results
6.2.1 Introduction
As detailed in Chapter 3, the observations concerned the interactions that occurred between the triad members, namely the mentor teacher, the first year pre-service teacher and the final year pre-service teacher. The results of the observations are presented as shown in Figure 6.1.

Figure 6.1 Presentation of observation results

RQ3: In the context of a mentoring triad, what are the roles of each of the participants and what interactions occur between the participants?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Triad interactions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Specific participant interactions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant dominance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interaction duration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical proximity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interaction type</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interaction exchange</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Three triads in action were observed as shown in Table 6.1. Triads 1 and 2 were observed by the researcher for two sessions lasting between 60 minutes and 90 minutes respectively. Triad 3 observations were made for one session lasting 240 minutes. The observations occurred during a variety of times during the school day.

### Table 6.1 Observation sessions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Observation</th>
<th>Triads</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Triad 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observation 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morning session</td>
<td>Morning session</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(classroom, oval and eating area)</td>
<td>(classroom, eating area)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observation 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afternoon session</td>
<td>Afternoon session</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(classroom)</td>
<td>(classroom, other classroom, eating area)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.2 shows the number of interactions observed between the triad members during each observation session. It can be seen that the number of recorded interactions that occurred between the triad members varied in number and totalled 85 recorded interactions. It should be noted however, that in each scheduled observation, the final year pre-service teacher had assumed the role of classroom teacher and the mentor teacher had taken on the roles of supporter and assistant.

### Table 6.2 Total recorded interactions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Observation session</th>
<th>Triads</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Triad 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of interactions</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observation session 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of interactions</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observation session 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total interactions</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The observation protocol, as detailed in Chapter 4, examined specific types of the interactions that occurred. The observation results presented below consider each interaction type as shown previously in Figure 6.1.
6.2.2 Participant interactions

Table 6.3 presents the results of the number of interactions that occurred between the participants in the triads. It can be seen from Table 6.3 that a total of 35 interactions were recorded between the final year pre-service teacher and mentor teacher across the three triads, making interactions between these two participating groups the most frequent. The interactions recorded between the final year pre-service teacher and mentor teacher were similar in frequency in each triad. Recorded interactions where all three members of the triad were involved totalled 9, which indicates that interactions that involved all three members of the triad were limited. Seventeen (17) recorded interactions were observed between the first year and final year pre-service teachers in Triad 3 whereas 5 recorded interactions in Triad 1 and 2 occurred between the first year and final year pre-service teachers. First year pre-service teachers were involved in 50 recorded interactions overall, compared with 71 recorded interactions overall for the final year pre-service teachers. It can also be seen from Table 6.3 that the recorded interactions occurred more often in Triad 3 than in Triad 1 and 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Triad Members</th>
<th>Triads</th>
<th>Number of interactions</th>
<th>Number of interactions</th>
<th>Number of interactions</th>
<th>Total number of interactions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Triad 1</td>
<td>Triad 2</td>
<td>Triad 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First year and final year only</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>17</td>
<td></td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First year and mentor teacher only</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final year and mentor teacher only</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentor teacher, first year and final year</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total interactions</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>37</td>
<td></td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6.2.3 Interaction dominance

It can be seen in Table 6.4 that the mentor teacher dominates the recorded interactions in each of the three triads. However in Triad 3 the final year pre-service teacher is as dominant as the mentor teacher as there are 15 instances of dominance from the final year pre-service teacher compared with the 17 instances of dominance in recoded observations.
of the mentor teacher. The first year pre-service teachers are the least dominant during the recorded interactions with only 7 observations of dominance recorded. It can also be seen from the table that there were 7 interactions where no dominance was recorded.

**Table 6.4 Interaction dominance**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Triad member dominance</th>
<th>Triads</th>
<th>Total number of interactions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Triad 1</td>
<td>Triad 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number of interactions</td>
<td>Number of interactions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First year</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final year</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentor Teacher</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No dominance recorded</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>21</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6.2.4 Interaction duration

It can be seen from Table 6.5 that recorded interactions between the triad members lasted between 10 seconds and two minutes in duration. The table shows that the recorded interactions for all three triads were generally between one and two minutes in length, with some interactions lasting for 2 minutes or more. Recorded interactions that were more than 5 minutes in duration occurred 6 and 5 times within Triad 1 and Triad 2 respectively. As shown in Table 6.5 the duration of the recorded interactions between the Triad 2 members were varied.
### Table 6.5 Interaction duration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interaction duration</th>
<th>Triads</th>
<th>Total number of interactions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Triad 1</td>
<td>Triad 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of interactions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than 10 seconds</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than 60 seconds</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 minute – 2 minutes</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 minutes – 5 minutes</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 5 minutes</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 6.2.5 Physical proximity of the participants of the interactions

Table 6.6 shows that the majority of the recorded interactions occur in close physical proximity, with the participants either facing each other or being side by side. However, interactions which feature some physical distance between the triad members were recorded. It was observed that Triad 3 had 13 recorded interactions where the participants were 1-2 metres apart and 6 recorded interactions where the participants were more than two metres apart. It was also observed that Triad 2 had 9 recorded interactions that occurred when the participants were more than two metres apart.

### Table 6.6 Interaction physical proximity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Physical proximity</th>
<th>Triads</th>
<th>Total number of interactions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Triad 1</td>
<td>Triad 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number of interactions</td>
<td>Number of interactions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very close - side by side or face to face</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-2 metres apart</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 2 metres apart (e.g. opposite sides of the classroom)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6.2.6 Interaction types

Recorded interactions were classified as either formal or informal. It can be seen from Table 6.7 that the majority of recorded interaction types are formal in nature. The formal interactions occurred mainly between the final year pre-service teachers and the mentor teacher in Triad 1, 2 and 3, however in Triad 3 they also occur between the first year and final year pre-service teachers. Few recorded interactions were classified as informal. These interactions occurred between all triad members.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interaction participants</th>
<th>Interactions</th>
<th>Total number of interactions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Formal</td>
<td>Informal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>T1 T2 T3</td>
<td>T1 T2 T3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First year and final year only</td>
<td>4 3 15</td>
<td>1 1 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First year and mentor teacher only</td>
<td>3 4 6</td>
<td>0 1 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final year and mentor teacher only</td>
<td>9 13 13</td>
<td>2 0 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentor teacher, first year and final year</td>
<td>1 2 1</td>
<td>1 3 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>17 22 35</td>
<td>4 5 2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6.2.7 Interaction Exchanges

Tables 6.8, 6.9 and 6.10 present the formal and informal interaction exchanges that were recorded for each triad. It can be seen that the formal and informal interactions were then categorised into types of exchanges such as directions, clarifications, verbal cues and general conversations as explained in Chapter 4. The results for the recorded interaction exchanges for each triad are considered below.

It can be seen in Table 6.8 the exchanges that were recorded between the members of Triad 1 covered a variety of types and were between a range of triad members, however as reported previously there were more formal exchanges than informal exchanges. The majority of the formal exchanges that occurred were directions, verbal cues or general comments (usually about the learners), whereas the informal exchanges were general in nature. Most formal exchanges occurred between the mentor teacher and the final year pre-service teacher. The first year pre-service teacher was involved in some exchanges;
however only one exchange was initiated by the first year. The mentor teacher was often the initiator of exchanges. Informal exchanges were also mainly between the mentor and final year.

The exchanges which were recorded between the members of Triad 2, as shown in Table 6.9, were initiated by all three participants over the course of the observations. The majority of the recorded exchanges in Triad 2 involved the first year pre-service teacher with a total of 15 exchanges. There were 12 exchanges recorded between the mentor teacher and the final year. Exchanges which involved directions occurred frequently, as did verbal cues. There were five informal exchanges; each of these involved the mentor teacher and the first year pre-service teacher.

As can be seen in Table 6.10, the types of recorded exchanges that occurred between Triad 3 members were spread across a range of mainly formal interactions. All exchanges were classified as formal, apart from two exchanges which were classified as informal non-school small talk. As shown in Table 6.10, the majority of exchanges occurred between the final year and first year (14 exchanges) and the mentor teacher and the final year (14 exchanges). These exchanges were classified as directions and clarifying exchanges. Overall in Triad 3, exchanges concerned giving directions, clarifying information or instructions and providing verbal cues.
Table 6.8 Triad 1 Interaction exchanges

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Triad members</th>
<th>Interactions</th>
<th>Number of formal exchanges</th>
<th>Number of informal exchanges</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Direction</td>
<td>Clarifying</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First year to final year</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final year to first year</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First year to mentor teacher</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentor teacher to first year</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final year to mentor teacher</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentor teacher to final year</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentor teacher, first year and final year</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 6.9 Triad 2 Interaction exchanges

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Triad members</th>
<th>Interactions</th>
<th>Number of formal exchanges</th>
<th>Number of informal exchanges</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Direction</td>
<td>Clarifying</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First year to final year</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final year to first year</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First year to mentor teacher</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentor teacher to first year</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final year to mentor teacher</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentor teacher to final year</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentor teacher, first year and final year</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Triad members</td>
<td>Interactions</td>
<td>Number of formal exchanges</td>
<td>Number of informal exchanges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>----------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Direction</td>
<td>Clarifying</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First year to final year</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final year to first year</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First year to mentor teacher</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentor teacher to first year</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final year to mentor teacher</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentor teacher to final year</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentor teacher, first year and final year</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6.2.8 Summary
A summary of the observation results presented above is as follows.

- **Participant interactions** – the interactions between the mentor teachers and final year pre-service teachers are more frequent than those which involve the first year pre-service teachers.

- **Interaction dominance** – as expected, the interactions by mentor teachers were the most dominant interactions to occur in each triad. However the final year pre-service teachers also showed interaction dominance on a regular basis. The first year pre-service teachers showed limited dominance.

- **Interaction durations** – the majority of interactions were of between one to two minutes or less than sixty seconds duration.

- **Physical proximity of interactions** – most interactions within the three triads occurred whilst the members were physically close to each other.

- **Interaction types** – the majority of interactions were formal interactions with only a small number of informal interactions occurring. The final year pre-service teachers were involved in most of the interactions that occurred.

- **Interaction exchanges** – a wide variety of interaction exchanges occurred, however triad interactions that concerned giving directions or providing verbal cues were most prominent.

6.3 Interview Results
6.3.1 Introduction
The interviews were conducted with each triad member using a pre-determined set of questions as detailed in Chapter 4 and shown in Appendices D.1, D2 and D3. The three components of mentoring, as described in Chapter 2, were used as a coding tool as described in Chapter 3. The interview results using these components are presented below. Each mentoring component has been broken into aspects which are typical of the component. The aspects have been derived from the key words and phases which described each of the components and were outlined in Chapter 3. The aspects are representative of the responses from each of the groups interviewed. As the responses were examined, patterns were determined and responses were grouped. The interview results of each group, namely the first year pre-service teachers, the final year pre-service teachers and mentor teachers are presented in the following sections. The presentation of
results for each group uses a check tick (✓) for outcomes that are similar in each triad and a check cross (✗) for differences.

6.3.2 First year pre-service teacher interview results
Several patterns emerged from the first year results namely ‘team approach’, ‘support’, ‘roles’ ‘teaching’, ‘interactions’ and ‘role models’. Each pattern will be discussed according to the component of mentoring to which it is related.

It can be seen from Table 6.12 that the majority of the relational interactions and experiences that first year pre-service teachers engaged in were similar in nature. In this respect, during the interviews, each respondent indicated that they felt like and worked as part the triad team, that the EPL experience was positive and that there was scheduled time to talk as a group. However the first year pre-service teacher in Triad 1 reported that there was not much time to talk with the mentor teacher individually which lead to her feeling unsure of what was required of her. The first year pre-service teachers from Triad 1 and 3 indicated that they felt like an equal with the final year pre-service teachers during the professional placement as shown in the following interview responses.

I felt like I sat on an even playing field with her. First year respondent T1

That’s one good thing about the final year, I was her equal, she never used me as a teacher’s aide, she was always telling me that I was a teacher here as well. First year respondent T3

The first year pre-service teachers from Triad 2 and 3 described themselves as feeling like the assistant the relationship. For instance the first year in Triad 2 made the following comment.

I was able to ask the final year what lessons or jobs he would like done, so I could fit in with what he’d arranged. First year respondent T2

However the first year pre-service teacher in Triad 1 described herself as being like the teacher’s aide.

I kind of feel like I am a sit in, a helper or an aide, I haven’t really progressed to the next level yet. First year respondent T1
The responses from the first year pre-service teachers to questions which concerned the developmental component of mentoring described their experiences in a similar fashion. Each of the first year pre-service teachers commented on being provided with opportunities for teaching, as well as receiving advice and/or feedback from the mentor teacher or the final year pre-service teacher in their triad as can be seen in the following responses.

_I’ve been doing addition lessons, literacy groups, rotation activities and just things like when they go to art and music I’ve started to take them there and back. My mentor teacher gives me really valuable written feedback about what I do._ First year respondent T1

_I mark the roll in the morning, the lessons vary, but I have something everyday, I get lots of practice. The final year always gave me feedback and advice about what I was doing._ First year respondent T3

The first year pre-service teachers from Triad 2 and 3 reported that they had developed their teaching strategies during their EPL experience as represented by the following examples.

_My behaviour management strategies have gotten better. In my first lesson the kids weren’t listening, they didn’t do what they were supposed to do, but now I think it is better._ First year respondent T2

_In the past its been behaviour and keeping the class quite and there’s a couple of students who won’t do what you tell them to do, but now I’ve got more control, but behaviour is definitely the most difficult thing I find to do._ First year respondent T3
As shown in Table 6.11 above, the first year pre-service teachers indicated that the final year pre-service teacher was a role model to them as indicated by the following comments.

**Because she also was still studying, I could ask ‘how do you this’ and she has ideas about how to do it. She would often give me hints and she was good at behaviour management and stuff like that.** First year respondent T1

**I have an idea of how be controlled the classroom and the way be implemented lessons and the kinds of things be had.** First year respondent T2
It worked really well, she always had her planning and it seemed to flow really nicely and the lessons went well. To watch she was amazing, but I loved it, to actually see what it was like.

First year respondent T3

The final year pre-service teachers were role models to the first year pre-service teachers in other ways as well. Both pre-service teachers in Triad 2 and 3 specifically commented that the final year pre-service teachers provided a view of the developmental level in which they needed to achieve by their own final year as shown in the following responses.

I think it was really good, because you kind of had a good idea of where I should be heading within my two years. First year respondent T2

I did love having a final year in the classroom, she showed me what I’ll be in three years.

First year respondent T3

As well the pre-service teachers in Triad 2 and 3 indicated that the mentor teacher was also a role model as demonstrated in the following comments.

Even like walking to the pool, you got an idea of what to do by watching the mentor – stop here, check that there were no cars coming, make sure that socks and shoes aren’t everywhere, simple stuff like that. First year respondent T2

My mentor has made my standards very high, she’s organised, has excellent time management and has great control, I know without that it would be chaos. First year respondent T3

6.3.3 Final year pre-service teacher interview results

Several patterns emerge from the final year results namely ‘team approach’, ‘roles’, ‘support’, ‘teaching’, ‘interactions’, ‘functions’ and ‘role model’. Each pattern will be discussed according to the component of mentoring to which it is related.

It can be seen in Table 6.12, that the three final year pre-service teachers indicated that the triad worked as a team and that there was always time to talk. Each final year pre-service teacher also reported a positive experience during their EPL. All three final year pre-service teachers indicated that they offered feedback and advice to the first year pre-service
teachers, with the final year pre-service teachers in Triad 1 and 3 stating that they mentored the first year pre-service teacher. The following comments reflect this statement.

*There was a time when the mentor told the first year to ask her mentor, so that reassured me that I was mentoring her. The first year was really open to questions and she often came to me for advice.* Final year respondent T1

*Yes I am pretty sure that I mentored the first year. When the first year did a lesson, I would notice something and tell her about it later.* Final year respondent T3

Each of the final year pre-service teachers reported that the relationship they had developed with their mentor teacher did not change when the first year began their EPL placement as indicated in the following comments.

*The relationship stayed the same. The first year worked in with our routines.* Final year respondent T1

*The relationship didn’t change, however the mentor teacher was really busy on the day that the first year came, so I tried to help out where I could.* Final year respondent T2

*It was really lovely, we all got on well together. It was interesting to see the difference between the way the mentor teacher and I interact and how the mentor teacher deals with the first year.* Final year respondent T3

It can also be seen in Table 6.12 that each of the final year pre-service teachers stated that they were given feedback from their mentor teacher as demonstrated by the following comments.

*She gave me feedback about the strategies I was using and gave me suggestions when I was unsure.* Final year respondent T1

*She notices where I need more work, gives me feedback and also lets me know where she thought what I was already good at.* Final year respondent T2
From my first lesson there was lots and lots of positive feedback, there was always feedback. I was never made to feel like I was doing something wrong, it’s learning and you’re doing the right thing. Final year respondent T3

The final year pre-service teachers in Triad 2 and 3 articulated specifically that they were given many opportunities to teach and try out different strategies, whereas the final year pre-service teacher in Triad 3 stated that she ran the classroom and felt like the teacher as can be seen from the following comments.

I had a couple of days where the mentor teacher wasn’t there for the day, so that was good to know that you can manage it, and you know when you make a mistake because it is totally your fault and you have to fix. Final year respondent T2

My mentor teacher was very upfront and said ‘I don’t want you to be my yes girl, you have your own thoughts and opinions so tell me’. Immediately I thought that I can bring my own flavour...my teacher was really good at saying to me, we’ve got to build the relationships but your classroom has to run well. Final year respondent T3 (emphasis provided by the respondent)
Table 6.12 Summary of final year interview responses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mentoring Components</th>
<th>Aspects</th>
<th>Triad 1</th>
<th>Triad 2</th>
<th>Triad 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Relational</strong></td>
<td>Worked as a team</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Offered advice and feedback to first year</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Time to talk</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Positive experience</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Flexible relationship</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Relationship with mentor teacher did not change because of first year</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mentored first year</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Developmental</strong></td>
<td>Opportunities to teach and try out different strategies</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Opportunity to run the classroom and be the teacher</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Grown in confidence</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mentor teacher provides feedback</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mentor teacher shared and gave ideas and advice</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Contextual</strong></td>
<td>Worked as the teacher</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mentor teacher is a role model</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Directed first year and nominated lesson delivery</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Role model for the first year</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All three final year pre-service teachers, as shown in Table 6.12 above, indicated that they took over the role of teacher in the classroom. The final year pre-service teacher from Triad 2 indicated that he was a role model for the first year pre-service teacher as demonstrated by the following response.

*I’m not a teacher myself yet, but I guess she can see if my lessons are working and take something away from it.* Final year respondent T2

The final year pre-service teachers from Triads 1 and 3 indicated that they directed the first year pre-service teacher when they were in the classroom and nominated when they should deliver their lessons as indicated in the following responses.

*I directed the day and planned each day out. I left a section for the first year to do her lessons and then told her about times and the routines of the day.* Final year respondent T1
When I was a first year I was in a classroom with a final year, I didn’t have a very good time so I was aware of this and made sure that the first year didn’t think she was stepping on my toes. I looked at her lesson plans and gave her suggestions and nominated when she should do them. Final year respondent T3

6.3.4 Mentor teacher interview results
Several patterns emerged from the mentor teacher results namely ‘team approach’, ‘teaching’, ‘interactions’, ‘functions’, ‘enculturation’ and ‘role model’. Each pattern will be discussed according to the component of mentoring to which it is related.

It can be seen from Table 6.13 that the responses from each of the mentor teachers were similar. All three mentor teachers indicated that the mentoring experience was positive not just for them, but also for the first year and final year pre-service teachers as reflected in the following comments.

*Having three people in the room worked really well.* Mentor teacher T2

*Once you were into the EPL, it has been a really good journey and there were no difficulties.* Mentor teacher T3

According to the mentor teachers, the positive nature of the experience was a result of the way the triads functioned. In particular, each of the mentor teachers made specific comments about the relationship between the first year and the final year pre-service teachers. As shown in Table 6.13, it was indicated by the mentor teachers that the first year and final year pre-service teachers cooperated and shared experiences together with the final year mentoring the first year pre-service teacher throughout the EPL experience.

*They had shared some experiences and the final year was then able to take on the mentor teacher role and modelling.* Mentor teacher T1

*Sometimes when I was talking with the first year, the final year would give some of his scenarios and tell about his experiences, which was very useful.* Mentor teacher T2
The two girls seemed to gel and get on well together. I think being a similar age group, they respond well together and they know the language to use with each other. Mentor teacher T3

When the mentor teachers were asked about whether the triad model increased or decreased their workload, their responses were similar. Each mentor teacher responded that their workload initially increased, but after time the workload was no heavier with two pre-service teachers than one pre-service teacher as demonstrated in the following comments.

I think it comes out even. It increases your workload in that you have to make sure that you are meeting Uni expectations, filling in the paperwork, checking lesson plans and things like that, but it is also another pair of hands in the room, you can assign an activity or responsibility for a KLA to the pre-service teachers. Mentor teacher T1

It increased my workload before, during and after lunchtime. In class, it decreased the workload and it made the class run a lot smoother, it made the routines happen a lot smoother. Mentor teacher T2

Probably increased the workload in a way, but once we knew each other and sorted it out, it all fell into place. Mentor teacher T3

Each of the mentor teachers commented on their own developmental progress by indicating that the experience made them reflect on their own teaching practice as shown in the following comment.

It makes you think about your own practice because you have to explain why you are doing things. Mentor teacher T1

In this respect, the mentor teachers in Triads 1 and 2 commented on the development of the pre-service teachers, responding that they as mentors provided opportunities for them to improve their skills and confidence.
I started off the year by supplying everything to the final year like she was a teacher aide, but by the end of the term she was planning the unit and then giving the first year tasks to do, which she did brilliantly. Mentor teacher T1

With my final year I really tried to take a step back and let him take charge. I spent more time examining and explaining the curriculum with my first year so that she could then achieve her goals.” Mentor teacher T2

Table 6.13 indicates that each of the three mentor teachers suggested that they changed their mentoring practices during the EPL experience due to the needs of the pre-service teachers. In Triads 1 and 3 the mentor teachers appeared to contextualise the experience by firstly introducing the pre-service teachers to the classroom routines and then setting them tasks so that they became immersed in the classroom. This contextualisation is reflected in the following comments.

To start with they had specific tasks because we run the room where we have all together time, then group time etc. then we would assign rotations or a lesson once they were comfortable with the routine. Mentor teacher T1

To make sure that they were busy all of the time; that everyone knew what they had to do (when and where); making sure that the day ran smoothly. Mentor teacher T3

In Triads 1 and 2, the mentor teacher specifically discussed how the triad model would function in the classroom as shown in the following comments.

It was an expectation that the final year would step up and mentor the first year. Mentor teacher T1

We did have a talk about how the situation would work, I sat down with him and explained what her requirements were and then we spoke about how he would feel comfortable with her implementing those things. Mentor teacher T2
Table 6.13 Summary of mentor teacher interview responses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mentoring Components</th>
<th>Aspects</th>
<th>Triad 1</th>
<th>Triad 2</th>
<th>Triad 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Relational</strong></td>
<td>Positive experience</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Workload remained the same</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Spent time with each pre-service teacher to build a relationship</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✗</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>First and final year got on well – shared experiences</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Final year mentored the first year pre-service teacher</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Developmental</strong></td>
<td>Reflected on my own practice (mentor teacher)</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Provided opportunities for pre-service teachers to develop and grow</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✗</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pre-service teachers confidence grew</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✗</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Final year took over some of the mentor roles</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Contextual</strong></td>
<td>Tasks were set so that the pre-service teachers became immersed in the classroom</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✔️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pre-service teachers were introduced to classroom routines</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✔️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mentor role changed over time (needs based)</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Discussed how the triad model would be structured</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✗</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6.3.5 Summary
A summary of the interview data in terms of the three mentoring components is as follows.

Relational component of mentoring

*Team approach*

- The mentor teachers and the pre-service teachers from each triad reported that the EPL was a positive experience.
- First year and final year pre-service teachers identified that they worked as part of the triad team

*Support*

- First year and final year pre-service teachers identified that there was time to talk, however the first year in Triad 1 identified that there wasn’t time for her to talk to the mentor teacher on an individual basis.
Roles

- Each final year pre-service teacher offered advice and feedback to the first year pre-service teacher in their triad with the first year pre-service teachers from Triad 1 and 3 indicating that they felt equal with the final year, but were also directed and organised by the final year pre-service teacher.
- The mentor teachers in each triad observed that the first year and final year pre-service teachers got on well and shared experiences during the EPL and that the final year pre-service teacher mentored the first year pre-service teacher.

Developmental component of mentoring

Teaching

- First year pre-service teachers indicated that they were provided with opportunities to teach both small groups and whole class situations.
- First year pre-service teachers from Triads 2 and 3 indicated that they developed their teaching strategies during EPL.
- The first year pre-service teachers from Triads 1 and 2 suggested that they were encouraged to take risks and try out new strategies and the final year pre-service teachers from Triads 2 and 3 suggested that they were given opportunities to teach and try out new strategies.
- The mentor teachers from Triads 1 and 2 indicated that they provided opportunities for the pre-service teachers to develop and grow as teachers and observed that the pre-service teachers’ confidence grew.

Interactions

- First year pre-service teachers and final year pre-service teachers indicated that they were given advice and feedback by their mentor teacher.
- Each first year pre-service teacher indicated that they were given advice and assistance by the final year pre-service teacher in their triad.

Functions

- Each of the mentor teachers suggested that they reflected upon their own practice through working with the pre-service teachers.
- Each of the mentor teachers observed that the final year pre-service teachers took on some of their mentor roles with the first year pre-service teachers.
Contextual component of mentoring

Role model

- Each of the first year pre-service teachers viewed the final year pre-service teacher in their triad as role models, however only the final year from Triad 2 indicated that he saw himself as a role model to the first year pre-service teacher.
- The first year and final year pre-service teachers from Triads 1 and 2 indicated that the mentor teacher were role models to them.

Teacher

- The final year pre-service teachers in each triad indicated that they worked as the teacher during the EPL, however the final year pre-service teachers from Triad 1 and 3 commented that they directed the first year and nominated when the first years would implement their lessons.
- The mentor teachers in each triad observed that their role as mentor changed during the EPL and comment that it became needs based as the final year pre-service teachers took on some of their mentor roles.

Enculturation

- The mentor teachers from Triads 1 and 3 set tasks for the pre-service teachers and introduced them to the routines of the classroom.
- The mentor teachers from Triads 2 and 3 specifically discussed how the triad model would be structured with their final year pre-service teacher.

6.4 Summary of results

This chapter has presented the Phase 2 results through the analysis of the observation and interview data. The following summary has combined the results from both sets of data collections and presents the key aspects of the interactions between triad members as well as the functionality of the triad.

Triad Interactions

The interactions which occurred in the triad were a combination of formal and informal exchanges; however the majority of interactions were of a formal nature. Many of the exchanges were lead or dominated by the mentor teacher or the final year pre-service teacher, with the first year pre-service teacher taking a minor role in the interactions within the triad. Interactions which involved first year pre-service teachers were often with the final year pre-service teacher in their triad. This observation was then endorsed by the
responses made in the interviews by the first year and final year pre-service teachers as in many instances the final year provided advice and feedback to the first year.

**Triad Mentoring**

It can be seen from the results presented that the triad model worked well for the participants in this research. Each of the three mentoring components was evident in the triad model and the pre-service teachers were able to develop their teaching skills as required. Within the triad mentoring model, no member was excluded and it can be seen that each gained from the mentoring that occurred. The triad model, according to each triad member, created the opportunity to work as a team. The mentoring role changed within the relationship with mentor teachers adjusting their mentoring and final year pre-service teachers taking on some of the mentor teacher’s mentoring roles with the first year pre-service teachers. The roles of each triad member however were defined by the relationship between the triad members.

The results from this chapter in conjunction with the results from Chapter 5 form the basis of a detailed discussion of the results in Chapter 7.
Chapter 7
Discussion of Results

7.1 Introduction
This chapter considers the results presented in Chapter 5 and 6 in terms of the research questions presented in Chapter 1, namely:

**Research Question 1:** What are the perceptions of pre-service teachers about mentoring?

**Research Question 2:** What mentoring experiences do pre-service teachers encounter during their professional placements?

**Research Question 3:** In the context of a mentoring triad, what are the roles of each of the participants and what interactions occur between the participants?

This chapter is divided into three sections. The first section addresses Research Question 1 by drawing on the results of the online survey which concerned the pre-service teachers’ perceptions. The second section draws upon the results of the online survey which concerned the pre-service teachers’ experiences and addresses Research Question 2. The third section considers Research Question 3 by addressing the results of the observations and interviews which concerned the use of mentoring triads in a primary school setting.

Chapter 2 presented a working definition of mentoring that took into account the three components of mentoring namely relational, developmental and contextual components as can be seen in Figure 7.1. The working definition, as shown below, is drawn upon in the discussion of the research results within this chapter.
As well as using the working definition to discuss the results, it can be seen from Figures 7.2 and 7.3 that the results for each research question utilise categories in which to discuss the results.

As shown in Figure 7.2 Research Questions 1 and 2 utilise the categories of mentoring, mentoring relationships, mentoring roles and peer mentoring to discuss perceptions and experiences of mentoring. The categories were derived from the survey areas outlined in Chapter 4 and identified in Chapter 2.

The discussion of the results from the observations of the triads and interviews with the triad members is presented using the three mentoring components as shown in Figure 7.3. The mentoring literature, as outlined in Chapter 2, indicates that the three components
enables the use of holistic approach to mentoring. Accordingly a discussion of the results using the three components intends to provide an insight into the possible holistic qualities of the triad model.

Figure 7.3 Consideration of Research Question 3 in terms of the mentoring components

7.2 Consideration of Research Question 1
7.2.1 Introduction
As highlighted in Chapter 2 mentoring is neither well defined nor conceptualised by mentor teachers or pre-service teachers, hence the use of a working definition enables an in-depth exploration of the way mentoring experiences occurred within this research. The discussion which follows concerns the perceptions of the first year and final year groups about mentoring during their Embedded Professional Learning (EPL). The results are discussed using the categories as presented in Figure 7.2.

7.2.2 Perceptions of Mentoring
Generally, the first year and final year groups held similar perceptions about the nature of mentoring. Mentoring, according to the two groups, was seen as a relationship where they (the mentees) work with an experienced person, learn how to teach and are supported and guided in doing so. When asked ‘what does mentoring mean to you’ the majority of open ended responses from the two groups began with the word ‘someone’, implying that their perceptions of mentoring centre on the mentor. For example:
Someone to guide and be there for you, answer any questions and give general support. First year respondent

Someone with more experience who helps you through something. Final year respondent

The literature, as presented in Chapter 2, along with the working definition used in the research, refers to mentoring as a reciprocal relationship where both the mentor and mentee receive benefits from the experience. However, the first year and the final year groups in this research tend to view mentoring as a one sided event in which only they receive the benefits. The mentor is viewed as the person who can provide the pre-service teacher with what they want or need and consideration of what the mentor may gain from the relationship was not acknowledged in any of the responses. This view of mentoring held by the first year and final year groups may be due to the manner in which the professional experience is organised. In this instance, the first year and final year groups were allocated to a mentor teacher to complete particular tasks such as observations, teaching activities and reflections and to work with the children in the classroom.

First year and final year groups differed in their perspectives regarding the most important aspect of mentoring. The first year group nominated guide and role model as the most important aspect, whereas constructive feedback was nominated as the most important aspect by the final year group. This suggests that the two groups have differing needs. Results from studies by Bouquillon, Sosik & Lee, (2005) and Le Maistre et al. (2006) demonstrated that specific needs and requirements of the mentee determined the type of mentoring that is provided. In this research, the first year group, who were at the beginning of their journey, can be expected to need more guidance and role modelling about the process of teaching, whereas the final year group can be expected to need constructive feedback to assist them to consolidate their already developed skills.

The two groups also recognised that ‘others’ could also be viewed as mentors, particularly other Bachelor of Learning Management (BLM) students. Both groups described other BLM students with whom they shared their mentor teacher as obliging and supportive, as well as a friend, colleague and co-enquirer. They indicated that they liked working with someone who had had similar learning experiences to them as demonstrated by the following comment.
They would be a source of support – someone at the same level, or someone who has been in your shoes. First year respondent

This result indicates that the pre-service teachers in this research are open to the use of peer mentoring. This finding supports research by Le Cornu (2005, p.358) who found that pre-service teachers can “become co-learners and co-constructors of knowledge”. Within the peer mentoring literature it is recognised that there are advantages in having more than one mentor. For instance, according to D’Abate and Eddy (2008) and McCormack and West, (2006), an assortment of mentors is often the key to a successful mentoring relationship as each mentor offers a different skill set or contextualises the situation according to experience.

7.2.3 Perceptions of Mentoring Relationships

As shown in Chapter 5, pre-service teachers had relatively specific perceptions concerning the nature of a mentoring relationship. Both groups indicated a preference for a relationship that was supportive and friendly and one where constructive feedback is given. The respondents concerned themselves with the roles of a mentor to describe the relationship as demonstrated in the following comments.

A mentor that will not overpower the relationship but act as a guide and example for me to follow without harsh judgement, only suggestions. First year respondent

“The mentor guides and gives constructive feedback, allowing the mentee to take risks and try new things. Final year respondent

This result is similar to those obtained by Maynard (2000) in her study of mentoring relationships which reported that a teacher’s mentoring practice was the catalyst as to whether the mentoring relationship was a positive experience or not. Furthermore, the pre-service teachers in Maynard’s study indicated that a mentor who is supportive, welcoming and accepting, and who provides feedback creates a successful mentoring relationship.

In this study the perceptions which the first year and final year groups held about mentoring relationships embraces the working definition of mentoring presented earlier.
Although the responses indicated that the mentor was the catalyst within the relationship, their responses generally concerned those aspects of mentoring that would benefit them. As such, a ‘non-hierarchical’ relationship which works ‘towards specific professional and personal outcomes for the mentee’ is reflected in the first year and final year groups’ responses. This result is demonstrated in the following comments.

*A mentor who will show me what and what not to do with the class. Someone who is willing to share and guide me along the correct path. Someone who will allocate even 15 mins to look over what I need to do and assure me that I’m doing ok.* First year respondent

*A mentor who gives lots of constructive feedback on what I do and also gives demonstration of skills so that I can build those skills.* Final year respondent

The findings from this research support the observations made by Eby, Rhodes and Allen (2007) that mentoring relationships are defined in terms of the different types of support provided by the mentor to the mentee.

With regard to the matching of mentors and mentees, the final year group indicated that the most important factor was personality followed by age, experience and interests. The final year group also reported that being assigned to a mentor who requested a pre-service teacher was an important factor. Cox (2005) suggests that matching mentors and mentees is a complex task and needs to take account of a range of factors. The factors identified in this research are similar to the findings in Cox’s (2005) research.

**7.2.4 Perceptions of Mentoring Roles**

The first year and final year group differed in their perceptions of their role in the mentoring relationship. The first year group viewed their role as being proactive and contributing to the relationship whereas the final year group viewed their role as one of learning and reflecting. By being proactive and contributing to the relationship, the first year group intimated in their responses that these roles would assist them in developing their skills as a teacher. In this respect, the results indicate that the roles of the pre-service teacher in this case focus upon their own needs within the context of the classroom as shown in the following comments.
I assist the mentor teacher when needed, I complete tasks I need to complete. I am always actively involved in classroom activities, whether it be roaming around, helping students or helping my mentor teacher prepare for a lesson. First year respondent

To reflect and learn from what is said and done around me. Final year respondent

The responses from both the first year group and the final year group concur with Walkington’s (2005a) and Freeman’s (2008) research regarding the role of the mentee outlined in Chapter 2. This result also confirmed research undertaken by Bouquillon et al. (2005) that mentoring evolves over time and according to the stage of the protégé’s development. As can be seen from the findings of this research each group has different needs, therefore signalling a difference in roles.

7.2.5 Perceptions of Peer Mentoring

As stated in Chapter 1, a peer mentor in this research is a BLM student who is either at a similar stage in their education program or who is further ahead. More of the final year group than the first year group rated it essential or important to have a group of BLM students at their teaching school. The comparative analysis of the data confirmed this finding. It was found that both groups would assist each other by clarifying tasks, providing ideas and thoughts for lessons as well as be a sounding board for their fellow students. The importance placed on this by the pre-service teachers in this research has been similarly observed by Le Cornu and Ewing (2008) where reciprocity between the pre-service teachers promotes the pre-service teacher becoming a member of a learning partnership and provide mutual support during the professional experience. In this research, the group of BLM students referred would be at a similar stage, however there may be some groups who are at different stages in their program.

Nevertheless, both first year and final year groups deemed that there were a number of benefits and limitations in having another BLM student in the same classroom. Benefits included having a source of support and collaborative opportunities for final year pre-service teachers to mentor first year pre-service teachers. For example,

You could observe one another and offer feedback from a different level to that of the mentor teacher. You could also feed off one another. First year respondent
Can show them the ropes and answer their questions, they would be an extra set of hands.  

Final year respondent

Limitations of having another BLM student in the same classroom included less time for teaching, less time with the mentor and limited opportunities to develop their own teaching skills as demonstrated in the following comments.

Time constraints on the mentor teacher having two students, feeling too comfortable, the other person having a negative effect on your development. The teacher seeing you as one together rather than two separate teachers. First year respondent

No opportunity to grow as a teacher due to limited teaching time. Final year respondent

The benefits and limitations raised by the respondents in this research are similar to findings from research conducted by Goodnough et al. (2009). They reported benefits such as learning from each other, mutual support and feedback as well as improved outcomes for the children in the class. Limitations found by Goodnough et al. were dependency, time and a competitive atmosphere, as well as a loss of individuality and confusion. The research by Goodnough et al. (2009) strongly endorsed the use of peers in professional experiences for pre-service teachers.

The final year group was specifically asked if they would like to be a mentor to a first year pre-service teacher. A small percentage indicated that they would not, however the majority indicated that they would like to be mentor. The final year group indicated that mentoring would entail providing a supportive role such as encouraging, answering questions and providing feedback on progress. As documented in Chapter 2, peer mentors can negate the hierarchal power structure often present in traditional mentoring dyads. The results from this research indicate that peer mentoring encourages a collaborative, supportive learning environment; however perceptions about time could be a factor which prevents peer mentoring from occurring. The above result supports the proposed use of learning communities in professional placements as described by Le Cornu and Ewing (2008). Le Cornu (2005) suggests that the role of peer mentors value add to the role of the mentor teacher.
7.2.6 Summary
The foregoing discussion concerning the pre-service teachers’ perceptions of mentoring in terms of the three components of mentoring has been generated.

**Relational component**
- The mentor teacher was viewed as the catalyst of the relationship therefore indicating that pre-service teachers viewed the mentor as being responsible for nurturing the relationship.
- The two groups of pre-service teachers did not view the relationship as reciprocal as outlined in the definition.
- The first year and final year groups were aware that they had specific roles to play in the relationship, but these roles focused on their own developmental needs rather than on contributing to the relationship.

**Developmental component**
- The first year group and final year group assumed that the mentor teacher would meet all of their developmental needs.
- The first year group and final year group assumed that the mentoring practices of the mentor teacher impact on how they develop their teaching skills.
- Each group had differing developmental needs, therefore the mentoring needed to cater for the specific personal and professional needs of the mentees as outlined in the definition.

**Contextual component**
- Both groups had a specific idea of the type of mentoring relationship they wanted. This relates specifically to the concept of a non-hierarchical relationship as outlined in the definition. This also relates specifically to the type of role model the mentor teacher is.
- The pre-service teachers generally saw the benefit of peer mentors and the final year group generally thought they would be good peer mentors.

It is noted that the mentoring perceptions of the pre-service teachers in this research confirm and/or support findings from the literature. Although there are no new findings as such, it has been established that the three components of mentoring are present within the pre-service teacher’s perceptions of mentoring.
7.3 Consideration of Research Question 2

7.3.1 Introduction

Research Question 2 concerned experiences of mentoring by the first year and final year groups. As shown in Figure 7.2, the results in Chapter 5 were considered using four categories of results to consider Research Question 2.

7.3.2 Experiences of Mentoring

There were both similarities and differences between the first year and final year groups in regard to who had mentored them during their EPL. Whilst the majority of first year and final years pre-service teachers nominated their mentor teacher over 50% of the final year group indicated that they had been mentored by another teacher at the school or another BLM student, as well as the Lead Learning Manager. The first year group however, indicated that the university coordinator had been a mentor, placing little emphasis on another teacher, another BLM student or the Lead Learning Manager. These findings are similar to those by Laker, Laker and Lea (2008) in their investigation of sources of support for pre-service teachers during the professional placement. Formal sources of support included the mentor teacher and the university academic as these were allocated sources of support. Informal sources consisted of other pre-service teachers and other teachers and can be described as unplanned sources of support. In this research, as indicated above, both types of support were identified.

The two groups were also asked to outline what they wished to achieve from EPL. The first year and final year groups both indicated that obtaining confidence, experience and learning how to be a teacher were their goals. This result is in line with previously considered findings in this research which concerned their perceptions of mentoring. Both groups had stated that mentoring was a process whereby they worked alongside another who was an expert in order to be guided in learning how to teach. In this respect the aspects of mentoring considered to be most important were those that enabled them to achieve their goals.

Several questions in the survey addressed the nature of actual conversations with the mentor during the mentoring experience. Results indicated that there were differences between the two groups concerning the types of conversations that occurred between the
mentor teachers and first year or final year pre-service teachers. Conversation topics varied reflecting different needs and levels of each group. For instance, first year conversations frequently centred on the learners within the classroom, whereas final year conversations tended to be about teaching strategies. This result confirms Bearman et al. (2007) observations that mentoring consists of social interactions which are centred on the needs of the participants. Although there appears to be no existing research that specifically investigated mentoring conversations between mentor teachers and pre-service teachers, Walkington (2005a) found that having open communication channels was often referred to as a characteristic of successful mentoring. In this respect, the results found in this research indicate that conversations occurred through a variety of modes. Although the majority of conversations occurred face to face at school, other conversations between the mentor and pre-service teacher were conducted by email or phone. Few pre-service teachers indicated that they used online spaces such as Facebook. The first year and final year groups indicated that their preferred method of communication was face to face at school, however the final year group also often spoke with their mentor on the phone. Heirdsfield et al. (2008) obtained a similar result with face to face conversations, email and phone being the most common modes of communication, however the education students in their study also utilised such modes as text-messaging. Both groups reported that conversations were initiated regularly by both the mentor teacher and the pre-service teacher, indicating that this is a shared role. This result also confirms Walkington’s (2005a) reflection concerning the pre-service teacher as the mentee being an active participant in mentoring.

7.3.3 Experiences of Mentoring Relationships
In exploring experiences of the mentoring relationship, the final year group was asked about the nature of their mentoring relationship and how it changed during their professional placement. The final year group had been in the classroom from the beginning of the school year which at the time of the research investigation totalled a period of six months. Seventy-eight percent (78%) of the final year group indicated that the relationship evolved from one where they were the student teacher who observed and assisted to one where they became the teacher or worked as a co-teacher in the classroom with the mentor. This result confirms previous research by Kram (1985) which examines the phases through which a mentoring relationship progresses. According to Kram (1985), progression through phases such as initiation, cultivation, separation and redefinition
during a mentoring relationship is natural. The results in this research indicate that the final year group had progressed from the initiation phase to the cultivation phase at the time of the research. Such a progression is considered appropriate according to the time the final year pre-service teachers had spent in the relationship.

7.3.4 Experiences of Mentoring Roles
The first year and final year groups were asked to identify the roles undertaken by their mentor teachers. The roles that the mentor teachers undertook were similar according to both groups of pre-service teachers. Both groups in this research rated role model, guide, advisor and coach in a similar fashion. This result confirms other research about the role of the mentor teacher. For instance, Jones (2000), in her study about mentor roles found similar results. The pre-service teachers in her study nominated advisor, colleague, coach, and model as mentor roles. There were some differences regarding the roles of the mentor teachers between the first year group and final year group. The final year group rated colleague and friend more highly than the first year group. This result may have arisen because of the amount of time spent in the classroom at the time of data collection, as this final year group had been in the classroom for large periods of time from the beginning of the year. In contrast the first year group had been in the classroom for only a few single day visits. This explanation is consistent with Lucas’ (2001) conclusion that time, along with shared experiences and interactions, redefine roles throughout a mentoring relationship.

7.3.5 Experiences of Peer Mentoring
The first year and final year groups indicated that they assist the other students at their teaching school in a variety of ways. Both groups nominated clarifying tasks, provide ideas and thoughts for lessons and be a sounding board for their fellow students as ways in which they had assisted another BLM student. The final year group indicated that other students helped me to celebrate and gave me support. This result supports the presence of a pre-service teacher learning community as researched by Le Cornu (2005). In such a community, the pre-service teachers support each other, become co-learners and engage in professional dialogue which in turn enhances their abilities both inside and outside the school environment. Although this research did not specifically investigate the effects of peer mentoring on other pre-service teachers, the findings indicate that informal learning communities, as referenced in Chapter 2, may already exist in the professional placement.
However some first year and final year group members in this study indicated that fellow pre-service teachers had not assisted them at all, therefore it can be concluded that peer mentoring may not be effective in every situation and with all participants.

7.3.6 Summary
Following is a summary of the discussion concerning the pre-service teachers’ experiences of mentoring in terms of the three components of mentoring.

Relational component
- Both groups of pre-service teachers articulated that communication was a shared responsibility.
- The final year group indicated that their mentoring relationship changed over time.
- The first year and final year groups indicated that peer mentoring provided opportunities to work with other pre-service teachers that was non-hierarchical.

Developmental component
- The first year and final year groups focussed on their own developmental needs within the mentoring relationship in which they were involved.
- Both groups of pre-service teachers acknowledged that there are many sources of support during EPL apart from the mentor teacher.
- The first year and final year groups articulated that they had individual needs that relate to their stage in their program therefore the mentoring needed to cater for the specific personal and professional needs of the mentees as outlined in the definition.

Contextual component
- The first year and final year groups identified mentoring roles that were both developmental and contextual.

It is noted that the mentoring the pre-service teachers experienced during their EPL generally confirmed and/or supported the findings from the literature. This research has identified the extent of the three mentoring components have taken effect in the mentoring of the first and final year groups.
7.4 Consideration of Research Question 3

7.4.1 Introduction

The results in Chapter 6 specifically addressed Research Question 3. As shown in Figure 7.3, the three components of mentoring have been used to discuss mentoring triads in action. The results for the first year group, the final year group and the mentor teacher group will be discussed in terms of the relational, developmental and contextual components as well as the functioning of the triad as community of practice.

7.4.2 First year pre-service teachers

Relational component of mentoring

Interview data revealed that the EPL experience was a positive one for the first year pre-service teachers in each triad. The first year pre-service teachers indicated that they worked as part of the classroom team. As part of their role within the team, each of the first years took on the role of an assistant in the classroom completing jobs that needed to be done. The observations of the interactions they were involved in supports this finding. The exchanges involved the final year pre-service teacher or mentor teacher directing or cueing the first year pre-service teacher to undertake a task. The first years seem to accept this role as the first year group in this research placed an emphasis on working together and helping each other out as indicated by the following examples.

*We all just got used to working with each other.* First year respondent T3

*There were always jobs that had to get done, changing the readers and stuff, so whatever one of us were busy teaching our lesson the other one did. It was good because we just helped each other out with lessons – marking, walking around the room and other things like that.* First year respondent T2

This result is similar to Maynard’s (2000) findings in her study of pre-service teachers during their practicum in respect to the pre-service teachers placing value on being welcomed, accepted and included in the classroom.

It was also found that the first year pre-service teachers *talked* with both the mentor teacher and the final year pre-service teacher as both members of a triad and individually. Although the first year pre-service teachers were not part of every interaction that
occurred, they saw themselves as having the least experience and who needed to learn about being a teacher. However, the first year pre-service teachers, in each case, reported that they had a closer relationship with the final year pre-service teacher than the mentor teacher. The observational data also confirms the foregoing as the majority of interactions the first year pre-service teachers were involved with were with the final year pre-service teachers. According to McGee (2001), a mentor who is a peer can often relate to the mentee better than a traditional mentor as similar experiences are more recent and contemporary. The first year pre-service teachers also felt that because the final year was still a student teacher as they were, they were ‘more equal’ as demonstrated in the following comment.

*It sort of felt like between the final year and I were almost at the same level, her abilities were a lot higher and her experience a lot higher.* First year respondent T1

**Developmental component of mentoring**

The results revealed that the first year pre-service teachers saw their role in the triad as one of learner and helper, and accordingly most of the interactions tended to be of a directional nature. However, the first year pre-service teachers indicated that they were provided with many teaching opportunities, both whole class and small groups, which enabled them to develop their teaching skills such as using particular teaching strategies, giving directions and trying different behaviour management strategies. The teaching opportunities consisted of both EPL tasks and informal tasks. In most instances, the final year pre-service teacher tended to allocate the teaching opportunities as shown in the following comment.

*The final year is very accommodating. Each morning she would say something like….oh you’re doing your maths lesson today at this time… every now and then they say, you go and do that, just to practice using some essential skills and those sorts of things.* First year respondent T1

When discussing the roles of the final year pre-service teachers and mentor teacher in the triad, the first year pre-service teachers reported that the mentor teacher provided feedback and advice, whereas the final year pre-service teachers tended more often to provide assistance and advice. This indicates that the first year pre-service teachers were being mentored by the mentor teacher, and also by the final year pre-service teachers. The
total number of interactions between the first year pre-service teachers and final year pre-service teachers however were higher than those between the first year pre-service teachers and mentor teacher. A similar result was reported by Schmidt (2008). The members of the triad in her study were mentored by each other and without realising took on different mentoring roles in the relationship. In this research however, the final year pre-service teachers were consciously mentoring the first year pre-service teachers as in each case the mentor teacher had explicitly articulated to the final year pre-service teachers that they were to mentor the first year pre-service teachers as evidenced in the following comments.

One day I was having trouble profiling and I sat with the final year and a few times I heard the mentor teacher say ‘well you’re her mentor’ cause she’s doing the teaching. First year respondent T1

With the final year I had, we were able to talk about everything….the final year gave me feedback and I got quite a few ideas from him because he’s implemented more environmental things …and that’s something I would like to do in a classroom. First year respondent T2

**Contextual component of mentoring**

Each first year pre-service teacher commented that the final year pre-service teachers in the triads, along with the mentor teachers, were a role model for them. The role modelling the final year pre-service teachers provided was an enculturation type of modelling. Colvin and Ashman (2010) reported a similar result. Although their study was situated in higher education, the peer mentors were role models by way of enculturation. The peers helped to make connections between situations; they were advocates as well as sources of support. The first year pre-service teachers in this research also indicated that the final year pre-service teachers were role models in relation to the future standard the first year students needed to achieve, as evidenced in Chapter 6.

**A triad as a community of practice**

As considered in Chapter 2, according to Wenger (1998), each member of a community of practice has a role to play. Also members of a community of practice do not necessarily function in terms of hierarchical relationships because they constitute a group of people working towards collective learning. In considering the triad as a CoP, the first year pre-service teachers were the least experienced as a teacher. The results of this research
revealed that the first year pre-service teachers were able to contribute to the relationship but their contributions were more limited to those of the final year pre-service teachers and the mentor teachers. The results indicate that the first year pre-service teachers in each triad were treated as a member of the CoP in that they engaged in discussions, helped both the final year pre-service teacher and the mentor teacher in the classroom. The first year pre-service teacher was also involved in mutual activities such as planning and teaching as shown in the responses from the first year pre-service teachers. It was also evidenced that the final year pre-service teachers as peer mentors guided, supported and assisted the first year to become an integral member of the community of practice. In this research it was found that the first year pre-service teacher’s role was one of assistant and learner. Nevertheless the sample suggests that the first year pre-service teacher’s lack of experience did not exclude them from the community, but enabled them to use the community to transform and make sense of their learning.

7.4.3 Final year pre-service teachers

Relational component of mentoring

The final year pre-service teachers reported a positive experience during their EPL similar to those of the first year pre-service teachers. The final year pre-service teachers indicated that having a first year pre-service teacher in the same classroom did not change the relationship with the mentor teacher and provided the opportunity for the final year pre-service teacher to take on the role of mentor. Observations of the triad interactions confirm this as the final year pre-service teachers initiated as many, if not more interactions with the first year pre-service teachers as the mentors. Research results from Bullough et al. (2002), Bullough et al. (2003), Samimi-Duncan et al. (2010) and Schmidt (2008) reported that having a peer made it easier to create to develop and maintain a relationship with the mentor as the peers can support each other throughout the experiences. This result is similarly evidenced in this research by the following examples.

*I think it's really good for the first year because she's got two different people to learn from.*
Final year respondent T2

*I enjoyed having her there, when I first found out that there would be another student with me, I thought that's fine because I will be able to help her.* Final year respondent T3
In this respect Schmidt (2008) discussed her findings of ‘mutual mentoring’ or ‘shared mentoring’ noting that the mentoring which occurred between the pre-service teachers was two way. In this research however, the final year pre-service teachers mentored the first year pre-service teachers but not the reverse. Having spent only 12 days in classrooms, it can be expected that the first year pre-service teachers had neither the experience nor the ability to mentor final year pre-service teachers. Therefore it can be suggested that the structure of the professional placement did not position the first year pre-service teachers to mentor the final year pre-service teachers. Despite this, the first year pre-service teachers were viewed by the final year pre-service teachers as a colleague who could provide support.

**Developmental component of mentoring**

The results from Chapter 6 reveal that having a first year pre-service teachers in the classroom allowed the final year pre-service teachers to realise their capabilities as teachers. This finding is highlighted by the following comments from the final year pre-service teachers.

*Sometimes I offer her suggestions, and things like that as well, it’s been interesting for me to see…I remember what it was like and it’s good because it makes you realise that I have come a long way.* Final year respondent T2

*My mentor said to me, if anything it will certainly be able to help me manage situations that you will end up coming in contact with ….and if I wanted to give feedback, to do so because it will be from a different perspective.* Final year respondent T3

Findings in research by Bullough et al. (2003), Samimi-Duncan et al. (2010) and Schmidt (2008) were similar. The peers in their research reported that their confidence grew; they were more willing to take risks in planning and teaching and were able to assume a greater variety of roles in the classroom.

The observations of the interactions revealed that the final year pre-service teachers were involved in the majority of the interactions that occurred in the classroom; therefore the growth of the final year pre-service teachers during their professional placement could be attributed to the triad model and the role the final year pre-service teachers undertook in
the model. This can be deduced by the fact that, for instance, in most interactions between first year pre-service teachers and final year pre-service teachers that occurred in the classroom, the final year pre-service teacher helped to support the first year pre-service teacher by offering feedback and providing advice, in turn drawing upon their own experiences. This view is supported by the following comment.

*I often offered to look at lesson plans. She would email them to me and I was able to say, perhaps do that because I know the class and had been there longer.* Final year respondent T3

Documented research in the use of mentoring triads indicates that confidence and growth of abilities are common results reported for pre-service teachers. For instance, in studies by both Schmidt (2008) and Goodnough et al. (2009), the peers’ confidence grew through the supportive nature of peer mentoring and teaching abilities developed through observation, explanation and collaborative planning. This study found that observation of the first year pre-service teachers by the final year pre-service teachers was helpful in reflecting on their own practice. This finding is evidenced by the following comment from a final year pre-service teacher.

*She was working with the grade ones and she was just whizzing along and talking too fast, and I could see why they weren’t following, because she was talking too fast.* Final year respondent T2

**Contextual component of mentoring**

The observations of the triad models revealed that the final year pre-service teachers in each triad had taken on the role of classroom teacher at that point in time. The final year pre-service teachers indicated that the mentoring provided by the mentor teacher had presented the opportunity for them to be confident and capable in their abilities.

According to Walkington (2005a, p.56), mentoring provides opportunities to “evaluate beliefs and practices, question personal views and theorise more about practice”. This outcome is evidenced by the following statements.

*I just eased into it with the help of the mentor.* Final year respondent T1
She set a really high standard and expected a lot. But didn’t put too much pressure on me either, which is really good. I responded well to that, but right at the initial stage, sitting down with the mentor and getting an idea of what to do helped a lot. Final year respondent T2

**A triad as a community of practice**

Concerning the foregoing discussion the final year pre-service teachers in this research have indicated that they valued the learning opportunities that the triad model provided. Whilst the final year pre-service teachers were mentored by the mentor teacher and gained professional growth from this experience, they also indicated that the interactions and shared practice with the first year pre-service teachers also provided growth in confidence as a teacher and provided opportunities for reflective practice. Accordingly, the use of the triad model has created a sense of community that is akin to a community of practice as considered in Chapter 2 according to the characteristics of a CoP as described by Wenger (1998). It would seem that from the results of this research that such a setting appears to have been conducive for collaborative growth and mutual engagement between the members who shared the common goal of developing teaching practices in each triad.

**7.4.4 Mentor Teachers**

**Relational component of mentoring**

The observations of the triads in action revealed that the mentors were dominant, in so far as they lead the majority of the exchanges that occurred during the recorded observations. However the interviews revealed that the mentor had purposefully taken a step back during the professional placement so that final year pre-service teachers could mentor the first year pre-service teacher. Nevertheless the interactions in which the mentors participated indicated that they were still ‘keeping an eye on things’ as they gave directions, provided verbal cues and clarified activities with both first year pre-service teacher and final year pre-service teacher. Bullough et al. (2003) reported similar findings in their research as they found that the mentor teachers in that study slowly withdrew from the activities within the classroom to the sidelines so as to provide the paired pre-service teachers opportunities to develop their skills and abilities and support each other. In this research, the mentor teachers ensured that the final year pre-service teachers were aware of how routines would work. This result is evidenced by the following comments from the mentor teachers.
I made it clear that she (the final year) was to step up and part of her role as a final year was to be a mentor to the first year and to utilise the first year. Mentor teacher T1

You need to be organised and they need to know their jobs – it fell into place nicely. Mentor teacher T3

The mentor teachers reported that having a first year pre-service teacher and a final year pre-service teacher was a positive experience and they reported that the peers got on well together as demonstrated by the following comments from the mentor teachers.

*There was some understanding between them… the final year was able to say to the first year… this happened to me and it's okay, I think the first year could relate to her.* Mentor teacher T1

*He's very friendly, he volunteers his time naturally.* Mentor teacher T2

*The group dynamics, their zest and youth, makes you feel like… its fun really. The two girls seemed to gel and got on well together,… I don’t know if that happens every time.* Mentor teacher T3

Similar observations were made by the mentor teachers in Bullough’s et al. (2003, p.68) study namely that pairs of student teachers “became invested in each other’s development and success”.

**Developmental component of mentoring**

The results revealed that mentor teachers observed the final year mentoring the first year pre-service teacher on several occasions as demonstrated by the following comments.

*She understood exactly where the first year was coming from. They had some shared experiences and she was then able to take on the mentor role and modelled and explained and did those kinds of things.* Mentor teacher T1
The final year was honest, the feedback was critical, it was to the point, but she told her in a nice way how to fix things up and gave her support in order to make it better. Mentor teacher T3

Goodnough et al. (2009) and Schmidt (2008) reported similar findings in their research, adding that peer mentoring was complementary to the mentor teacher roles.

In providing opportunities for the pre-service teachers to develop their teaching skills and knowledge, the mentor teachers did what was needed as shown in the following comment.

It is what they need for whatever they are doing. So sometimes they need mentoring, sometimes they need the freedom to try new things. Mentor teacher T1

The recorded interactions in the observations support this. As noted in the relational component, the mentors gave directions, verbal cues and clarified situations with the pre-service teachers in the triads. Giving directions and verbal cues are more supervisory actions whereas clarifying and giving advice are mentoring roles (Kram, 1985).

However mentor teachers also observed some development in their own practices. This result is similar to the result found in Walkington’s (2005a) study with the mentors in her research stating that this was a key motivation for mentoring a pre-service teacher.

**Contextual component of mentoring**

The mentor teacher indicated that their role changed over the course of the relationship. They specifically indicated that it became needs based as the pre-service teachers developed their teaching skills and knowledge during the EPL. In each triad, the final year pre-service teacher became the mentor to the first year pre-service teacher taking on some of the mentoring roles from the mentor teacher. Therefore the first year pre-service teacher benefited from a second mentor who was experiencing the same circumstance. The mentor teacher in each triad, as indicated in the relational component, encouraged the final year pre-service teacher to mentor the first year pre-service teacher. This result is demonstrated in the following comments from the mentor teachers.

She was modelling to the first year what she had seen me model. Mentor teacher T1
The final year naturally just spoke to her about what worked when he did it and what he did differently. Mentor teacher T2

Once the final year was going into more of a teaching role, some of the responsibility went off my shoulders and onto the final year. The final year was telling the first year what she had to do, there’s your spot, this is your lesson. Mentor teacher T3

The mentors were also able to cater for each of the pre-service teacher’s needs. Findings reported by Bullough et al. (2002) are similar. The mentor teachers in their research found that having more than one pre-service teacher assisted them in determining the pre-service teachers needs more clearly. The findings in this research are evidenced by the following comments as the importance of context is demonstrated in the comments.

With my final year student I really tried to take a step back and let him take charge. With my first year, I spent a lot more time with her going through curriculum documents and things like that. That was mainly because of the goal she had to achieve for the placement. Mentor teacher T2

I think the being a similar age group, they respond well together and they know the same language to use with each other. As a matter of fact with the final year, I used to bounce things off her, I would say, do you think this is too much to be asking a first year to do? Mentor teacher T3

Triads as a community of practice

The foregoing discussion of results suggests that mentor teachers in a sense have initiated the use of communities of practice as they specifically asked to mentor both a first year and a final year pre-service teacher. Whilst the above discussion has indicated that the mentor teacher was focussed on supporting the pre-service teacher’s needs, the results also indicate that the mentor teacher became the facilitator of the mentoring relationship and was able to use the collaborative nature of the triad model to create a community of practice where the pre-service teachers were also supported by each other through shared experiences.
7.4.5 Summary

Based on the foregoing, it has been possible to generate tentative conclusions concerning the triads in action in terms of the three components of mentoring used in the working definition of mentoring.

Relational component

Team approach

• The triad members worked together as a team which provided opportunities for reciprocity which is reflected in the working definition of mentoring.

Support

• The triad model provided support for all three members of the triad and provided opportunities for the sharing of experiences between the first year and final year pre-service teachers.

Role

• The mentor teachers were the catalyst of the development of the relationship, therefore the mentor teachers’ role changed over the course of the relationship.

Developmental

Teaching

• The first year and final year pre-service teachers indicated that there were opportunities for the practice of teaching.

• The final year pre-service teachers realised their abilities, capabilities and associated growth.

Interactions

• Specific roles of each triad member were evident. The first year pre-service teachers assumed the role of assistant, the final year pre-service teachers assumed the roles of teacher and mentor, whereas the mentor teacher assumed the role of relationship overseer and guide.

• Feedback, advice and help were provided by the mentor teachers and the final year pre-service teachers.

Functions

• Peer mentoring contributed to the development of the first year pre-service teacher.

• The final year pre-service teachers were key role models for the first year pre-service teacher.
• Needs based mentoring was provided by the mentor which is reflected the working definition of mentoring.

*Contextual*

**Role model**

• Role modelling by the mentor teacher and the final year pre-service teachers provided enculturation and identification of a future standard to aspire to for both the first year and the final year pre-service teachers.

**Interactions**

• The roles of each member of the triad changed over time, in particular the final year pre-service teacher and the mentor teacher.

**Functions**

• Mentoring enabled the first year and final year pre-service teachers to view contextual aspects, in particular the work of a teacher. This finding is reflected in the working definition.

**7.5 Summary**

The foregoing results have demonstrated that the working definition of mentoring provided a means to explore mentoring in-depth, especially in regards to the three components of mentoring. As such the findings from this research have illuminated two key conceptualisations – mentoring in action and the potential of mentoring triads. Whilst many of the results from this research were consistent with and support previous research in this field the results discussed from Research Question 1 and 2 have shown that there is a disparity between mentoring perceptions and mentoring experiences. This disparity suggests that the anticipated expectations of the pre-service teachers’ regarding their mentoring experiences in EPL differ from the mentoring in action that occurs. Although there are some differences between the first year group and final year group concerning their perceptions and experiences, it has been identified that the mentor teacher is seen to be central to the mentoring experience. Each of the components of mentoring was evident, however the relational and developmental components were more apparent than the contextual component. This may be attributed to the contextual component often being an enculturation type of role in this research.
In relation to RQ3 the results have demonstrated the potential of using mentoring triads. The results from this research indicate that the model has many advantages. The main advantage centred on the use of peers as mentors in an environment of reciprocity. The first year and final year pre-service teachers navigated the EPL experiences together and provided a support mechanism for each other and the mentor teacher. Each member of the triad received benefits from the relationship and contributed to the relationship. Within the operation of the triads, each member had identifiable and specific roles, however importantly, although some of the roles were the same, they were used in different contexts. Each component of mentoring was evident and identifiable in the triad relationships despite not all mentoring components being evident in the survey results, signalling that the triad model provides the opportunity for a holistic mentoring approach to exist.

Finally the foregoing consideration of the results also provides support for the contention that the mentoring triads examined in this research may be envisaged as a ‘community of practice’. Lave and Wenger (1991) indicate that the varying levels of knowledge and skills within a community of practice create a unique learning environment that addresses the shared interests and needs of the group as was the case in this research. Specifically each of the triads in this research functioned as a community of practice and provided an opportunity for collective, as well as individual learning.

Chapter 8 presents the conclusions and implications of the research and identifies areas for further research as well.
Chapter 8
Conclusions and Recommendations

8.1 Introduction
This research has sought to explore the perceptions and experiences about mentoring in an Embedded Professional Learning (EPL) placement in a teacher education program and to investigate the use of mentoring triads in the EPL context.

This chapter begins by examining the limitations of the research investigation. This is followed by conclusions and implications of the research. Arising out of the research a set of recommendations which concern the use of mentoring and particularly the use of triads in pre-service teacher education are then presented. Areas for future research are then presented prior to the concluding remarks.

8.2 Scope and Limitations of the Research Investigation
The scope of this research has been the perceptions and experiences of a sample of first year and final year Bachelor of Learning Management students studying at CQUniversity Noosa campus. As well, the research examined the use of mentoring triads for a pre-service teacher professional placement experience as an alternative mentoring model to that currently used. There are limitations of the research investigation and these may have impacted upon the conclusions that can be made from the research results and these are considered in this section. Their considerations also serve and point to further areas of research that can be undertaken as presented in Section 8.6.

Research sample
Two samples of pre-service teachers were used within the research. The samples for Phase 1 and 2 of the research were drawn from one campus of CQUniversity. It has been assumed that the sample of students from this campus was representative of that of other CQUniversity regional campuses and that the samples for each of the triads were also representative of pre-service teachers generally.
As well, the online survey in Phase 1 of the research was distributed to all first year and final year pre-service teachers, however less than 50% responded; therefore the responses provided may not have been representative of all pre-service teachers in the program.

Finally three functioning triads were explored in Phase 2 of the research. These triads were teacher initiated, that is the teacher had requested to have both a first year and final year pre-service teacher. It follows that conclusions made from this research apply to this set of circumstances in the use of triads. More research is warranted in the use of mentoring triads and is an area for further research (see Section 8.6).

**Mentoring conditions**

The Bachelor of Learning Management (BLM) program includes long term professional placements as shown in Chapter 2, and these are structured so that the pre-service teachers have the opportunity to become part of a classroom and a school community. It was anticipated by the developers of the BLM that this would provide the opportunity for pre-service teachers to build a relationship with mentor teachers (see Section 1.2.2, Chapter 1). BLM students experience more than the number of placement days in schools recommended by the Queensland College of Teachers. Accordingly, the findings from this research may not be relevant to other pre-service teacher education programs.

**Mentoring training**

As discussed in Chapter 2, preparation for mentoring is reported to improve mentoring outcomes (Heirdsfield et al. 2008; Hennissen et al. 2011; Holloway, 2001; Terrion et al. 2007). The pre-service teacher program considered in this research did not provide formal opportunities for training or preparation for mentoring for the pre-service teachers or mentor teachers. Although pre-service teachers were made aware of tasks and expectations for their professional placement through a series of university lectures, the sessions did not include specific information about the nature of mentoring nor their roles as mentees. According to Ballantyne and Mylonas (2001), mentoring is not a natural skill. Training or preparation for mentoring develops an understanding of the nature of mentoring and the roles to be played (Ballantyne & Mylonas, 2001). Had mentoring training been available different results may have occurred. This research has not been concerned with the outcomes of mentoring. As such the influence of mentoring and training for mentoring are areas for further research as considered in Section 8.6.
8.3 Conclusions and Implications

8.3.1 Introduction
The conclusions and implications from Phase 1 and 2 are considered separately. This discussion is organised in this way due to the different foci of the two phases of the research. The three components have been used to highlight that each component exists both explicitly and implicitly in mentoring. This section is then followed by reflections on the conclusions and implications.

8.3.2 Online survey
Results from this research indicate that there is a difference between the perceptions of pre-service teachers about mentoring and their experiences of mentoring. This section identifies four main conclusions which can be made from the online survey results namely:

- The nature of mentoring is not well understood by pre-service teachers
- Perceptions of mentoring differed from the experience
- Perceptions about mentoring tend to be needs based mentoring
- The role of the mentor is central to the mentoring relationship

The nature of mentoring is not well understood by pre-service teachers
A conclusion that can be made from the results presented in Chapter 5 is that first year and final year pre-service teachers have a relatively narrow understanding of the nature and purpose of mentoring as considered in Chapter 2. This conclusion is based upon the responses provided by the two groups which suggest that pre-service teachers consider that:

- The act of mentoring is focused on the mentee, and
- Mentoring centres on the pre-service teacher’s development as a future teacher.

The review of literature in Chapter 2 identified two significant aspects of the nature of mentoring. Firstly it established that mentoring is a reciprocal relationship, and secondly that mentoring contains three components, namely relational, developmental and contextual. The first year and the final year groups suggested that mentoring was centred on their needs. They saw the mentor teacher’s role as one which assisted and supported them. Although the pre-service teachers saw themselves as part of a team, they indicated that they did not contribute to the relationship or reciprocate it. The first year and final year groups also viewed mentoring as mainly concerning developmental progress, with
limited focus on the relational and contextual aspects. It can be concluded from this result that the pre-service teachers do not have a holistic understanding of the nature of mentoring as considered in Chapter 2 as their focus centres primarily on developmental aspects of mentoring. A holistic understanding of mentoring would encompass each of the three components of mentoring. This perception held by the pre-service teachers, as suggested in Chapter 7, may be inadvertently confirmed by the focus on ‘tasks to do’ within the professional placement guidelines set by the University. It has also been identified in the literature review that classroom teachers tend to use a combination of both mentoring and supervisory practices with pre-service teachers. It can be concluded that the experiences the first year and final year pre-service teachers in this research have been a combination of supervising and mentoring experiences.

An implication which arises from this conclusion suggests a need for training or placement preparation for pre-service teachers prior to the EPL experience if they are to obtain a holistic mentoring experience. The research has demonstrated that pre-service teachers do not appear to have a holistic understanding of what mentoring is and what their roles are within the relationship. In this way the expectations they may have of the professional placement can be aligned to what is outlined in the EPL experience guidelines. This implication also poses an area for further research.

**Perceptions of mentoring differed from the experience**

The findings from this research, as discussed in Chapter 7 and alluded to above, indicated that there were distinct differences between the perceptions of mentoring and the experiences of mentoring. The pre-service teachers’ perceptions of mentoring concerned what they wanted from the experience and how the mentor could provide this. The results of the research indicate that the experiences they encountered did not meet their expectations. Although the responses from the first year group and the final year group regarding their EPL experiences were positive in nature, they tended to use general descriptions of their experiences and did not explicitly describe the nature of the mentoring they encountered. The lack of explicitness in their open ended descriptions not only confirms their lack of understanding about what mentoring is, but also indicates that their perceptions, and therefore their expectations may be unrealistic.

An implication of this result suggests a need to incorporate explicit pre-placement preparation for pre-service teachers. It could be that perceptions and expectations may
inhibit the mentoring experience because the pre-service teachers do not understand what will occur and how it will occur. Therefore an understanding of the nature of mentoring and what the role of the pre-service teachers are within the placement may negate unrealistic expectations and provide pre-service teachers with knowledge not only about tasks to do, but also about what to expect and how to interact within the relationship. Pre-placement preparation for pre-service teachers is an area of research which currently lacks explicit investigation, therefore it has been identified as an area for further research.

**Perceptions about mentoring tend to be needs based mentoring**

The discussion of the results in Chapter 7 demonstrated that mentoring has been viewed by the respondents as being a ‘needs based’ process. The comparison between first year and final year pre-service teachers has identified that each cohort has differing needs according to their level of progress in their program and expect that the mentor teacher will meet their needs. This finding is supported by mentoring research (for example, Bouquillon et al. 2005; Le Maistre et al. 2006). Both the first year and final year group identified that most of their needs tended to be developmental; however there were aspects of the relational and contextual components identified which related to their needs. This finding further suggests the need for a more holistic approach to mentoring that takes into account all three components of mentoring; namely relational, developmental and contextual components.

An implication of this result suggests a need for mentor teachers to have a more holistic knowledge of mentoring. Although it may be assumed that mentor teachers are aware of the difference in needs between pre-service teachers, explicit guidelines and expectations may need to be provided to mentor teachers. This may take the form of mentor preparation or training. Although there is existing research regarding the training of mentor teachers, research which contains such a specific focus may be an area for further research.

**The role of the mentor is central to the mentoring relationship**

Phase 1 results have highlighted the importance of the role of the mentor. Specifically the mentor was viewed by the pre-service teachers as being central to the mentoring relationship and as such the mentor fulfils roles such as being a role model, colleague, friend, co-enquirer and guide. Chapter 2 classifies these roles into the three components
of mentoring with role model being classified as both developmental and contextual and colleague, friend, co-enquirer as relational and guide as developmental. The results suggest that the pre-service teachers view the mentors as central to the relationship and that the mentor teachers are using strategies from each component to guide the relationship. It follows that the importance of the interconnectedness between the roles of the mentor and mentee cannot be disregarded as the first year and final year groups indicated that there were three roles required of them during EPL, namely to be proactive and contribute, to learn and reflect, and listen and do. In this research the roles of the mentees were able to be specifically connected to the roles of the mentor teacher. For instance, if a mentor is engaged in ‘role modelling’, then the role of the pre-service teacher concerned will be those of ‘learning and reflecting’ or ‘listening and doing’. It can be concluded from this result that by utilising each component of mentoring in the role of the mentor that a holistic approach to mentoring can be promulgated as alluded to in Chapter 2.

The above suggested need for mentors to have greater explicit awareness of the interconnectedness of the roles of mentors and mentees can also be addressed by preparing mentors and mentees for mentoring through prior training. As such the training should encompass the opportunities to provide awareness of the interconnectedness of the roles as well as provide strategies for implementation. This aspect is also an area for further research as identified in Section 8.6.

An implication of the foregoing suggests a need for the mentor to have a greater explicit awareness of the interconnectedness of the roles between the mentor and mentee. This can be addressed in practice by conceptualising mentoring in action between the mentor and mentee as shown in Figure 8.1. It can be seen from Figure 8.1 that mentoring in action involves each of the three components of mentoring, however in the traditional ‘top down’ dyad context, as examined in Chapter 2, the mentee is central to the mentoring and the mentor is responsible for the mentee’s development. The results of this research indicate that mentees tend to perceive themselves as central to the relationship.
8.3.3 Mentoring Triads

The results from Chapter 6 have provided a direct insight into the workings of the mentoring triads in action. This section considers three specific conclusions and implications which have been made from the results namely:

- Mentoring triads facilitate the use of a holistic approach to mentoring
- Use of peer mentoring enhances the benefits of mentoring
- Mentoring triads can be viewed as a community of practice

The latter part of this section then presents a conceptualisation of a mentoring triad.

**Mentoring triads facilitate the use of a holistic approach to mentoring**

The results indicate that the use of triads in the pre-service teacher education context has considerable scope. The results demonstrated that the triad fashioned a working environment that was supportive, collaborative and collegial. It was this environment that provided the platform for the mentoring process as demonstrated by the following results:
• First year pre-service teachers had their individual needs met through two differing perspectives and a combined team approach.

- The final year pre-service teachers had ‘been in their shoes’ and had knowledge of expectations, tasks and requirements. They demonstrated to the first year pre-service teachers the development that needed to occur throughout their professional placements. The final year pre-service teachers had an understanding of the steep learning journey that the first year pre-service teachers were experiencing and were able to explain the ‘what’ and ‘how’ of the experience to them.

- The mentor teachers were able to utilise the final year pre-service teachers to mentor the first year pre-service teachers allowing the mentor teacher to observe both pre-service teachers in action. The mentor teachers were then able to provide more explicit feedback, and focus on the specific developmental needs of the first year pre-service teachers.

• Final year pre-service teachers developed their confidence, developed their teaching capabilities and reflected on their own practice through a shared mentoring role. They were provided with opportunities to develop mentoring skills as well as refine their management and organisational skills. The final year and first year pre-service teachers shared a common language and therefore were able to clarify and confirm understandings with each other. The collaborative environment helped the final year pre-service teachers have increased confidence in their abilities as teachers.

• Mentor teachers reflected on their own practice, shared the mentoring role with the final year pre-service teachers and observed the individual needs of each pre-service teacher through a collaborative approach. Although the mentor teachers were still leading the triad and held responsibility for the operation of the classroom, the positive environment which the triad created provided a collaborative workspace where the mentor teachers were supported by the pre-service teachers.

Mentoring in its purest form, as described by Kram (1984) and Eby et al.,(2007) in Chapter 1 (Section 1.2.1), was evident in the triads in this research. In examining these researcher’s descriptions of mentoring in relation to the mentoring triads that are the subject of this research, it was found that the mentoring triads were able to address each component of mentoring, thus providing an inclusive mentoring experience. This suggests that the triad model, in particular provides the opportunity for a “reciprocal, yet asymmetrical learning
partnership” to develop (Eby et al., 2007, p.10). It also suggests that the use of the triad provides the prospect for explicit learning in a working environment that is supportive, collaborative and collegial. In this context triads provide the platform for true reciprocity to occur between the mentoring members.

Moving from a traditional practicum model which utilises dyads to a more contemporary triad model has implications for universities and schools involved in pre-service teacher education programs. Such a change would require a rethinking of the structure of professional placements as well as a change in attitudes and perceptions towards the outcomes of mentoring from both universities and schools. However, specific preparation for mentoring would be an essential inclusion if such a model was to be successful. The reconceptualisation of mentoring using alternative models is an area for further research in the pre-service teacher education context. Although some research in this area has been undertaken recently, further research is needed.

Use of peer mentoring enhances the benefits of mentoring

The majority of first year and final year pre-service teachers in this research expressed positive perceptions about working closely with peers during their professional placements. This positive perception was clearly evident within the mentoring triads in action. Specifically the results in Chapter 7 indicate that the pre-service teachers who were part of a triad valued the opportunity to work with an experienced peer during their professional placement. Both the first year and final year pre-service teachers in the triads reported benefits, with the first year pre-service teacher benefiting from explicit peer mentoring from their final year colleagues. The positive influence of peer mentoring can, in part, be explained by the sharing of similar circumstances through a common language. Such a result could be applied to most professional placements where there are cohorts of pre-service teachers at the same school during the placement.

Results from Chapter 6 indicate that a peer mentor can complement and add value to a mentor’s mentoring actions. It was found that the final year pre-service teachers either assumed some of the mentor teachers’ mentoring roles or undertook new mentoring roles. The use of peer mentors in professional placements is perhaps worthy of consideration by universities when structuring their professional placements in pre-service teacher education programs. This research, along with research examined in Chapter 2, has highlighted the potential of its use. Use of a mentoring triad was found to provide experiences for both
groups of pre-service teachers that may be absent in the more traditional dyad model. Nevertheless, as with the use of mentoring dyads, the full potential of using a triad would deem it necessary to prepare both the pre-service teachers and mentor teachers prior to implementation. The investigation of mentoring triads is an area for further research.

It can be seen from Figure 8.2 that the mentor teachers and the peer mentors undertake particular roles within the mentoring relationship and these roles enable the mentoring. The research has identified that the contextual component of mentoring is embedded within the relationship as the participants in this research did not specifically articulate contextual roles. Figure 8.2 presents a conceptualisation of mentoring triads. The figure demonstrates that the three mentoring components, as in a mentoring dyad, provide a holistic approach to mentoring. However a key difference between the dyad and triad models is that the mentee engages in interactions from two sources of support. In effect the triad model provides a learning partnership approach where the mentor shares the responsibility of the relationship with the other members of the triad.

Figure 8.2 A mentoring triad in action
**Mentoring triads can be viewed as a community of practice**

The research results discussed in Chapter 7 highlighted three main advantages for using a triad for mentoring. Firstly, it was found that final year pre-service teachers became mentors to the first year pre-service teachers. The final year pre-service teacher assumed responsibility for mentoring roles for which the mentor teacher was initially responsible. It was found that the final year pre-service teachers felt empowered by this responsibility. Secondly, it was found that the first year pre-service teacher benefited from having two mentors within the relationship, as each mentored from a different perspective. The mentor teachers mentored from the perspective of their professional experiences whereas the peer mentor mentored from the perspective of their own experiences as a student teacher. In this respect the triad model enabled the possibility of fulfilling the mentor roles holistically. A third finding is that of enhanced collaboration. It would appear that from the case studies the triad model enhanced a culture of collaboration amongst the members. This culture included a sense of equality among all members and allowed for reciprocity.

Based on the discussion of communities of practice as noted in Chapter 2, it can be concluded that the triad model functioned as a community of practice as the model incorporated a shared interest, shared practice and provided an opportunity for shared interactions which enabled each of the members to transform their learning.

In addition to the above conclusions is the consideration of communities of practice (CoP) and how it provides a broader framework for mentoring triads. As noted in Chapter 2 a community of practice is a group of people who share common interests, goals and practices. The structure of the mentoring triads in this research provided a platform for a CoP to emerge as shown in Figure 8.3. The Embedded Professional Learning formed the community which in turn provided the setting for the development of teaching practices of each triad member. The development of teaching practice occurred through interactions and shared practices between the triad members. As such, this research has provided evidence that the characteristics of a CoP, namely the domain, the community and the practice are present within a triad. Indeed the actions of the members in each of the triads were those that would occur within a CoP. Ensuring that the members of a mentoring triad are familiar with the purpose and nature of a CoP may provide further benefits to the group and is an area to consider for further research.
The triads in this research contained peers and as indicated above peer mentoring occurred between the first year and final year pre-service teachers. As identified by Blair (2008) and Le Cornu (2005) peer mentoring can be a feature of a community of practice or a learning community. As discussed in Chapter 7 in the context of the triad observation and interview data, the peers in this research supported each other and were engaged in explicit and reflective learning throughout their professional placement alongside the mentor teacher. Therefore the triads created a community of practice.
8.4 Research reflection

The motivation for the research as raised in Chapter 1 was focused on improving the professional experience for pre-service teachers. The results indicate that mentoring is a desirable component of the EPL and using mentoring triads has many benefits. Despite these findings as evidenced from the results in Chapter 7, there are a number of issues and problems that need to be addressed if the full benefits of mentoring and the use of triads are to be realised. The issues and problems to be addressed are as follows:

- University expectations of mentor teachers – unwritten expectations of the mentor teacher which are difficult to fulfil and include the building of collegial relationships, identify pre-service teacher needs, provide explicit feedback, be a role model and support the pre-service teacher.

- Role clarification of mentors and mentees – lack of clarity regarding the roles of mentors and mentees during the professional placement along with limited understanding of the interconnectedness of the roles.

- Time constraints – professional placements are often short term in nature therefore providing limited time for mentees to develop their teaching practices.

- Focus on ‘tasks to do’ – university guidelines emphasis on tasks to be performed by the pre-service teacher, rather than the development of teaching practices and the development of ‘becoming a teacher’.

This research has suggested such a reconceptualisation can provide potential benefits to both mentor teachers and pre-service teachers and therefore has provided the basis for a reconceptualisation of mentoring in the pre-service teacher context. The findings from this research have uncovered the potential of an alternative approach to the mentoring of pre-service teachers during their professional placements. The mentoring triad, although not a new concept, provides such an alternative approach. Unless universities and education authorities begin to consider the importance of mentoring within the professional experience and begin to adopt a reconceptualised approach to mentoring, the same outcomes will continue to be achieved.

8.5 Recommendations

Arising from the forgoing sections, nine recommendations concerning the use of mentoring and mentoring triads in the pre-service teacher context.
8.5.1 Adoption of a holistic definition of mentoring

This research revealed uncertainty about the nature of mentoring amongst mentor teachers and pre-service teachers as well as about the roles of mentors and mentees within the relationships. The results from this research and the literature in Chapter 2 have highlighted a holistic approach to mentoring is not being used extensively. Many differing definitions of mentoring in the pre-service teacher context exist in the literature and often confuse mentoring and supervising. Furthermore definitions within the literature do not address the three components of mentoring. The findings from this research suggest that if the full potential of mentoring is to be achieved then the roles of the mentor and mentees need to be articulated in mentoring practices along with aspects of the interconnectedness between the roles. It is proposed that the following recommendations be adopted.

- **Recommendation 1 – Adoption and explicit inclusion of the three components in mentoring definitions**
  The results of this research have shown that awareness and explicit inclusion of the three components is needed so that mentors and mentees can maximise the potential mentoring has to offer. As such, the definition used throughout this research should be adopted within the pre-service teacher education context as it includes each of the components as demonstrated in Chapter 7.

- **Recommendation 2 – Implementation by pre-service teacher education programs of the roles of a mentor teacher and a pre-service teacher in a mentoring relationship that encompasses the three mentoring components**
  It was identified in Chapter 2 that there are specific roles mentor teachers undertake when mentoring a pre-service teacher. Although the roles of the pre-service teacher were limited in the literature, the interconnectedness between the mentors’ roles and that of the mentees was identified. It is these roles and this interconnectedness which need to be identified and defined for those participating in a mentoring relationship to bring clarity to the nature of mentoring in the pre-service teacher education context.

- **Recommendation 3 – Use of professional placement guidelines which includes aspects of mentoring**
  The professional placement guidelines provided to both mentor teachers and pre-service teachers need specific information about the nature and process of
mentoring. Such guidelines would provide mentors and mentees with clarity about the components of mentoring, mentor and mentee roles, as well as the operation of a mentoring relationship.

8.5.2 Mentoring training for all participants in the mentoring process

This research has highlighted a difference between perceptions of mentoring and experiences of mentoring. It has also highlighted that mentoring does not always occur as intended. This suggests a need to provide mentoring training for all those concerned in the mentoring process.

- **Recommendation 4 – Training for the mentor teacher**
  As identified in Chapter 1, mentor teachers are often unsure of how to mentor and seek to confirm whether their mentoring actions are ‘right’. Training for teachers which centres on the act of mentoring and identifies strategies to use with pre-service teachers would provide skills and knowledge and assist in ensuring a quality placement and quality mentoring for pre-service teachers.

- **Recommendation 5 – Training for pre-service teachers**
  Pre-service teachers need to be provided with training prior to the EPL to develop their skills and knowledge of mentoring as well as their roles in the mentoring process. As such training which focuses on mentoring and the role of the pre-service teacher may alleviate false expectations of their mentoring experiences and provide in-depth knowledge of what is required of them.

- **Recommendation 6 – Training for the academic staff who teach and coordinate the professional placement**
  Academic staff involved in professional placements, as representatives of the teacher education program, would benefit from training about the nature of mentoring, the roles undertaken by mentors and pre-service teachers. Such training would provide academic staff with a common understanding about mentoring.

8.5.3 Use of triads in pre-service teacher education programs

This research has provided evidence of the benefits of using a mentoring triad and the associated peer mentoring. The triad model made possible an enriched experience for the mentee (first year pre-service teacher) that was not possible in the dyad model. Enhanced use of the relational, developmental and contextual components of mentoring were evident in the model, as well as an enhanced environment for a community of
practice. It is proposed that the following recommendations concerning the use of mentoring triads be adopted within the professional placement context.

- **Recommendation 7 – Use of triads as a component of the EPL program**
  The incorporation of mentoring triads into the professional placement program should be planned for as an optimal approach. Determining the nature of the triads and how they will function should be decided upon prior to implementation.

- **Recommendation 8 - An implementation plan for the use of triads is developed**
  That a plan is specifically developed for the implementation of triads in professional placements. The implementation plan would address placement and operational factors and include a training plan for participants and a detailed framework/ set of guidelines for each of the participants.

- **Recommendation 9 – Training for all participants as triads members is provided**
  Specific training should be provided for all participants involved in triads, such as mentor teachers, pre-service teachers and university personnel. Such training would need to address the operation and function of the model, the roles and responsibilities of the participants and the working nature of the relationship.

### 8.5.4 Further research in mentoring

This research has identified a number of areas for further research which concerns mentoring in the pre-service teacher context.

- **Recommendation 10 – Areas for further research**
  - Reconceptualising mentoring in pre-service teacher education contexts
  - The three components of mentoring and the mentoring process
  - Interconnectedness and efficacy of the roles of mentors and mentees
  - Use of mentoring triads and peer mentoring
  - Mentoring triads as a community of practice
  - Mentoring training
  - Outcomes of mentoring for all participants
  - Role of mentoring in teacher professional development

Section 8.6 provides the specific details regarding these identified areas.
8.6 Areas for Research

The findings in this research and the limitations of the research provide a platform for areas of further research as identified in Section 8.5.

Reconceptualising mentoring in pre-service teacher education contexts

It was highlighted in Chapter 2 that definitions of mentoring are numerous and dependent on context. The mentoring literature which concerns pre-service teacher education, as outlined in Chapter 2, also highlighted that mentoring and supervising are often used interchangeably, with supervision often mistakenly termed mentoring, and vice versa.

This research investigation has documented that mentoring in pre-service teacher education utilises both mentoring and supervisory practices and it has endeavoured to reconceptualise mentoring in the context of pre-service teacher education. Further research is warranted to establish an approach to mentoring which includes the three components of mentoring identified. As this research investigation used a small research sample, it is recommended that a large scale replica of this research investigation, which includes several teacher education programs from a variety of universities, is undertaken.

The three components of mentoring and the mentoring process

The research has highlighted that mentor teachers mentor according to the level of development of the pre-service teacher. Results also indicated that the relational and developmental components of mentoring are mainly addressed during pre-service teacher EPL experience. The results also demonstrated that the three components come into play at different stages of an EPL experience. Further research is warranted to investigate the contexts of how each of the mentoring components can be appropriately utilised and how these relate to the mentoring process.

Perceptions and expectations of pre-service teachers in mentoring relationships

This research revealed that there were similarities and differences between the two groups of pre-service teachers in the research investigation about mentoring relationships during professional placements. The similarities and differences were explicitly related to the stage of their EPL. It was also identified in Chapter 2 that there has been limited research conducted concerning mentoring from the viewpoint of the pre-service teacher.
A research investigation, similar to the one conducted for this research, is proposed to examine in greater detail matters such as the nature of mentoring as well as mentoring relationships, roles and responsibilities. As this research sample was small and undertaken at only one regional university campus, a larger sample needs to be used. As such the sample could be derived from a number of universities and target specific year levels of students so as to provide a representation of all pre-service teachers. Such research could investigate the perceptions and expectations of pre-service teachers in general but also identify specific mentoring needs at specific stages of a pre-service teacher education program. The research could specifically seek to investigate the views of the pre-service teachers.

**Interconnectedness and efficacy of the roles of mentors and mentees**

This research identified the distinct roles of mentors and mentees in a pre-service teacher context. The research has also identified that the roles of mentors and mentees change throughout the relationships, are interconnected and that peers have specific mentoring roles. Although there was limited identification of mentee roles in the research literature as highlighted in Chapter 2, the pre-service teachers in this research have articulated mentee roles quite specifically. However, it would be appropriate to conduct further research into the roles of pre-service teachers as mentees and how they interconnect with the roles performed by mentors. Such research would provide specific information that can be used for preparation and training purposes and extends mentoring research about mentee roles and their interconnectedness.

A research investigation which examines the roles of both mentor teachers and pre-service teachers and how the roles interact with each other would provide specific data about their interconnectedness. The investigation would need to define the roles and specifically outline a description of each one so that the interconnectedness may be identified. The inclusion of peer mentors’ roles, where appropriate, would also provide a deeper layer of understanding regarding interconnectedness in this context.

**Use of mentoring triads and peer mentoring**

It was highlighted in Chapter 2 that there is limited research which concerns peer mentoring and the use of mentoring triads in pre-service teacher education contexts. This
research investigation further established that mentoring triads represent a contemporary approach in comparison to mentoring dyads to pre-service teacher professional placements. In particular, peer mentoring was demonstrated to occur naturally between the two peers and was complementary to the role of the mentor teacher. This research only involved three triads, therefore it follows that more extensive research of the use of triads would involve a larger sample of triads used.

Specifically research could be conducted which investigates how mentoring triads’ function, the roles each triad member undertakes and the outcomes achieved. Observations, interviews and participant journaling would provide data from which to determine both the benefits and limitations of the model.

**Use of mentoring triads as a community of practice**

It has been established by this research that a community of practice has the potential to further benefit the practices of mentoring triads. Therefore further research of triads operating as a community of practice is needed. Specifically, each characteristic of the communities of practice could be investigated, as well as whether multiple triads operating as communities of practice within a school community form a larger community of practice.

**Mentoring training**

This research has identified the need for training or preparation for mentoring. However the impact of specific mentoring training in regards to the outcomes of mentoring relationships is unknown in the context of pre-service teacher education. Therefore it would be appropriate to specifically investigate mentoring practices before and after mentoring training to determine the impact of training.

**Outcomes of mentoring for mentors and mentees**

It was highlighted in Chapter 2 that mentoring has numerous advantages and disadvantages for both mentors and mentees. However few recent research studies have examined the outcomes of mentoring in the pre-service teacher education context, specifically on mentor teachers and pre-service teachers during professional placement. A research investigation which specifically investigates the outcomes of mentoring for mentor teachers and pre-service teachers could examine both positive and negative
outcomes as well as the advantages and disadvantages of mentoring. Such research may assist in defining mentoring for pre-service teacher education as well as assist in developing a framework for mentoring which may include specific strategies.

**Role of mentoring in teacher professional development**

Mentoring a pre-service teacher, as shown in Chapter 2, is used as a professional development activity for mentor teachers. The examination of how mentor teachers develop professionally through the mentoring of pre-service teachers is an area for further research. As such, a research investigation would specifically interview mentor teachers as well as use journaling as a data collection method about their professional development through mentoring a pre-service teacher. The mentor teachers’ professional development as a teacher could be examined so as to add value to the mentoring research in the pre-service teacher education context. Such research has the potential to develop mentoring packages which specifically centres on the professional development of mentor teachers.

**8.7 Concluding Remarks**

This research has highlighted shortcomings in existing mentoring in the pre-service teacher context. Such shortcomings include a lack of training about mentoring for mentors and mentees, an expectation that mentors automatically know how to mentor, and a focus on development rather than relationships and context within mentoring practices. Not addressing the shortcomings will prevent taking others full advantage of the research findings.

A major contribution of this research in the field of pre-service teacher education has been to respond to the call for the use of an alternative mentoring model. This research has revealed the potential and benefits of using mentoring triads. Peer mentoring, as demonstrated in this research, has much potential in providing shared experiences and understandings between pre-service teachers which in turn provide opportunities for relational, developmental and contextual mentoring to occur. The triads were found to operate as a community of practice and therefore provide considerable opportunities than otherwise possible for collective and transformative learning about learning to teach. The professional experience, for the pre-service teacher, is the context for making meaning of what is learnt at university and transform this into practical application.
It is clear from this research that those involved in the professional placement need to be further supported. As noted above this research has reinforced the call for a change in practices which concern the organisation of mentoring and professional placements in pre-service teacher education. It is hoped that this research stimulates further research in this area of pre-service teacher education.
References


Appendix A.1 Letter of CQU Human Ethics Approval

21 July 2009

Ms Angelina Ambrosetti
Noosa Campus
CQU/University
P O Box 1128
Noosaville QLD 4566

Dear Ms Ambrosetti

HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE APROVAL: PROJECT H09/05-032 THE USE OF A MENTORING TRIAD FOR THE PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE IN THE TEACHERS EDUCATION PROGRAM

Thank you for submitting your application to the Human Research Ethics Committee. The committee noted that this is an interesting project and are eager to see your final report as to the outcomes of your study.

The Human Research Ethics Committee is an approved institutional ethics committee constituted in accord with guidelines formulated by the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) and governed by policies and procedures consistent with principles as contained in publications such as the Joint Universities Australia and NHMRC Australia Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research. This is available at http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/publications/synopsis/_files/e38.pdf.

On 21 July 2009, the committee acknowledged compliance with the conditions placed upon ethical approval for your research project, The use of a mentoring triad for the professional experience in the teachers education program (Project Number H09/05-032).

The period of ethics approval will be from 21 July 2009 to 7 December 2010. The approval number is H09/05-032; please quote this number in all dealings with the Committee.

The standard conditions of approval for this research project are that:

(a) you conduct the research project strictly in accordance with the proposal submitted and granted ethics approval, including any amendments required to be made to the proposal by the Human Research Ethics Committee;

(b) you advise the Human Research Ethics Committee [email ethics@cqu.edu.au] immediately if any complaints are made, or expressions of concern are raised, or any other issue in relation to the project which may warrant review of ethics approval of the project. [A written report detailing the adverse occurrence or unforeseen event must be submitted to the Committee Chair within one working day after the event.]
Appendix A.1 Letter of CQU Human Ethics Approval (continued)

(c) you make submission to the Human Research Ethics Committee for approval of any proposed variations or modifications to the approved project before making any such changes;

(d) you provide the Human Research Ethics Committee with a written "Annual Report" by no later than 31 January each calendar year and "Final Report" by no later than one (1) month after the approval expiry date. (A copy of the reporting pro formas may be obtained from the Human Research Ethics Committee Secretary, Sue Evans please contact at the telephone or email given on the first page.)

(e) if the research project is discontinued, you advise the Committee in writing within five (5) working days of the discontinuation;

Please note that failure to comply with the conditions of approval and the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research may result in withdrawal of approval for the project.

You are required to advise the Secretary in writing within five (5) working days if this project does not proceed for any reason. In the event that you require an extension of ethics approval for this project, please make written application in advance of the end-date of this approval. The research cannot continue beyond the end date of approval unless the Committee has granted an extension of ethics approval. Extensions of approval cannot be granted retrospectively. Should you need an extension but not apply for this before the end-date of the approval then a full new application for approval must be submitted to the Secretary for the Committee to consider.

The Human Research Ethics Committee is committed to supporting researchers in achieving positive research outcomes through sound ethical research projects. If you have issues where the Human Research Ethics Committee may be of assistance or have any queries in relation to this approval please do not hesitate to contact the Secretary, Sue Evans or myself.

Yours sincerely,

[Signature]

Associate Professor Lorna Moodham
Chair, Human Research Ethics Committee

Cc: Project File
    Professor John Dekkers, Professor Bruce Knight (supervision)

Application Category: A
Appendix A.2 Letter seeking permission to undertake research in a state school

29 July 2009

Mr Principal
State School
PO Box 50

Dear Mr Principal,

As an Education Doctorate candidate with CQUniversity, I am conducting a research project into the use of triad mentoring experiences during professional placements in pre-service teacher education programs. Mentoring triads that I am researching consist of a Mentor Teacher, a first year Bachelor of Learning Management student and a final year BLM student. Attached is a project information sheet.

As the first year Teaching Schools Coordinator at CQUniversity, I have been able to identify that your school contains two mentoring triads. I seek your permission to conduct research with this mentoring triad in your school. Approval from Central Queensland University’s Human Research Ethics Committee has been granted. The approval number is H09/05-032. The Office of Research is able to verify this project and can be contacted on (07) 4923 2807.

Individual permission will be sought from each participant, once permission had been granted by you as the Principal. School names and participant names will not be used. Each triad participating in the research project will have a triad code and pseudonyms. The research will be conducted using case study methodology. I will gather data through two methods:

- In-class observations of the mentoring triad
- Individual interviews with each member of the triad.

The data gathered from the observations and interviews will be used in my dissertation, and may also be used for journal publications.

Permission for me to conduct this research in your school can be communicated by email or letter. In order to organise the invitations to the participants, could you please inform me about permission by August 11, 2009.

CQUniversity

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Appendix A.2 Letter seeking permission to undertake research in a state school (continued)

Should you have any questions or need extra information, please contact me or my Ed D supervisor, Professor John Dekkers, on 5440 7000.

Please contact the Central Queensland University Office of Research on (07) 4923 1697 or by email to research-enquiries@cqu.edu.au, should there be any concerns about the nature and/or conduct of this research project.

Yours faithfully,

Angelina Ambrosetti
Principal Researcher
CQUUniversity Noosa
PO Box 1128
Noosaville BC 4566
a.ambrosetti@cqu.edu.au
Appendix B.1 Information sheet for participants

Mentoring Perceptions and Experiences Survey

Information Sheet for Participants

July 2009

I am conducting research around your recent experiences in Embedded Professional Learning. As a first year BLM student who is undertaking Embedded Professional Learning 1, you are invited to participate in this research project by completing a survey which contains questions about:

- Mentoring perceptions
- Mentoring experiences

The information gathered from the survey responses will help to inform me about your experiences with mentoring. The survey is part of my research on mentoring in pre-service teacher education and your responses will contribute to the formulation of mentoring guidelines. The research that I am undertaking is for my Education Doctorate.

Your participation in this research project is both voluntary and anonymous. Responses will not be identifiable, neither will information about which students participated or did not participate. All first year students will be provided with a copy of the Plain English report that is written as a result of the research findings.

An online survey tool called ‘Zoomerang’ will be used to administer the survey through a web link that I will send to your student email. The survey will take approximately 15 minutes to complete. You are able to withdraw from the survey at any time by closing the survey window, and you are also able to complete the survey without posting a response to every question. By undertaking the survey, you are consenting to participate, but as noted above, you are able to cease your participation at any time within the survey.

Approval from Central Queensland University’s Human Research Ethics Committee has been granted. The approval number is H09/05-032. Please contact the Central Queensland University Office of Research on (07) 4923 2607 or email research-enquiries@cqu.edu.au, should you have any concerns about the nature and/or conduct of this research project.

Thank you for your time,

Angelina Ambrosetti (MLM CQU)

Education Doctorate Candidate

Central Queensland University - CRICOS Provider Code: QLD - 00210C; NSW - 03195F; VIC - 00414D
Appendix B.2 First Year Survey

Mentoring Perceptions in Embedded Professional Learning

This research survey seeks your perceptions about mentoring and your first year Embedded Professional Learning experiences. The information gathered will help to develop current mentoring practices in teacher education programs.

The survey will take approximately 15 minutes to complete.

In order to participate in this survey for my research, you will need to confirm and agree with the following points:

- I understand that participation in this survey is voluntary and anonymous.
- I understand that the information gathered during the research may be used within my doctorate dissertation and may be published in journals etc.
- I understand that if I decide to withdraw my survey responses after completing the survey that my responses are irretrievable due to the anonymous nature of this survey.
- I understand that I can withdraw from the survey at any time by closing the survey window without penalty.
- I understand that I have the right to refrain from answering any questions without penalty should I wish to do so.
- I confirm I am over 18 years of age.

Thank you for your participation.

Angelina Ambrosati MLM (CQU)
Doctor of Education Candidate

1 * In order to begin the survey, please click on the agree button. By clicking on the agree button you are confirming that you understand the purpose of the survey and how the information will be used as listed above.

- [ ] Agree
- [ ] Disagree
Appendix B.2 First Year Survey (continued)

Mentoring Perceptions in Embedded Professional Learning

Section 1 - Your perceptions about mentoring.

Mentoring exists when a professional person serves as a resource, sponsor, and transitional figure for another person (usually but not necessarily younger) who is entering that same profession. Effective mentors provide mentees with knowledge, advice, challenge, and support as mentees pursue the acquisition of professional competence and identity" (O’Neill and Wrightman 2001, p.113).

2 What does ‘mentoring’ mean to you?

3 In your Embedded Professional Learning (EPL) experiences, who has mentored you? Choose as many responses as appropriate.

- My mentor teacher
- The Lead Learning Manager
- Another teacher at my Teaching School
- Another BLM student
- A university coordinator
- I have not been mentored by anyone

4 What do you hope to achieve from your first year EPL experiences?


Appendix B.2 First Year Survey (continued)

Section 2 - You and your Mentor Teacher

The following questions concern mentoring and your first year EPL Mentor Teacher.

5. To what extent do the following descriptors describe your Mentor Teacher?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Descriptor</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Supervisor</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coach</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<td>5</td>
</tr>
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<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guide</td>
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<td>2</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advisor</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colleague</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friend</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6. In terms of the mentoring definition provided, in what ways have you been mentored by your Mentor Teacher? Choose as many responses as appropriate.

- Directed me
- Supported me
- Guided me
- Advised me
- Helped me
Appendix B.2 First Year Survey (continued)

7. Generally, what types of mentoring conversations occur between you and your Mentor Teacher? Choose as many responses as appropriate.

- About specific tasks I have performed
- About specific tasks I need to do with my students
- Reflection on completed class lessons
- Career advice
- Teaching strategies and approaches
- About students I have to teach
- Life and/or personal issues
- The work of a teacher
- Nurturing me as a professional
- Other, please specify

8. When do mentoring conversations take place between you and your mentor teacher during EPL?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ad hoc conversations during class time</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Informal conversations at lunch time</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>During playground duty or bus duty</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planned or designated individual conversations at a specific time</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Before and/or after tasks have been performed</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix B.2 First Year Survey (continued)

9. Who initiates the mentoring conversations?
   - Myself: 1 never, 2 sometimes, 3 regularly, 4 much, 5 extensively
   - Mentor Teacher: 1 never, 2 sometimes, 3 regularly, 4 much, 5 extensively

10. What communication method is used in the mentoring conversations with your Mentor Teacher? Choose as many responses as appropriate.
   - face to face (at school)
   - face to face (elsewhere)
   - by email
   - by phone
   - web-based method such as Facebook
   - Other, please specify

11. In the context of your EPL, what aspect of mentoring is most important to you? Choose one response only.
   - Someone who guides me
   - Someone who supports me
   - Someone who reassures me
   - Someone who provides constructive feedback
   - Someone who is a role model
   - Someone who demonstrates techniques to me
   - Someone who assesses my performance
   - Someone who includes me unconditionally

12. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about your first year experiences and your Mentor Teacher.
   - Strongly disagree: 1
   - Disagree: 2
   - Neither disagree or agree: 3
   - Agree: 4
   - Strongly agree: 5

I was welcomed into the host class by my Mentor Teacher.
   - 1
   - 2
   - 3
   - 4
   - 5

The Mentor Teacher provided opportunities for me to complete the assigned portal tasks.
   - 1
   - 2
   - 3
   - 4
   - 5
Appendix B.2 First Year Survey (continued)

I have had ample opportunities to become involved in the routines of the classroom and to practice teach.

1 2 3 4 5

My professional development needs were met in my host classroom.

1 2 3 4 5

I was given constructive feedback by my Mentor Teacher.

1 2 3 4 5

I was encouraged to reflect by my Mentor Teacher.

1 2 3 4 5

13 What are your roles in the mentoring relationship?

[Blank]

14 Describe your ideal mentoring relationship.

[Blank]

Section 3 - You and other BLM students at your Teaching School

The following questions concern mentoring that may occur with/between you and other BLM students.

15 How important was it to have a group of first year BLM students at your Teaching School?

Not Important Important Essential

1 2 3

16 How have other first year BLM students at your Teaching School assisted you? Choose as many responses as appropriate.

- Not assisted me at all.
- Clarified tasks and information with them so I could progress my own development.
- Gave me support when things were not going well.
Appendix B.2 First Year Survey (continued)

17. Do you share your Mentor Teacher with another student teacher? Choose as many responses as appropriate.
   - No other student
   - First year BLM student
   - Second year BLM student
   - Final year BLM student
   - Student from another University

18. In your opinion, what would be the benefits of having another BLM student in the same classroom as you?

19. In your opinion, what would be the limitations of having another BLM student in the same classroom as you?

20. If you share your Mentor Teacher with another BLM student please complete the following 4 questions.

   If you do not share your Mentor Teacher with another BLM student please go to question 24.

   How would you describe the other BLM student in regards to the EPL experience? Choose as many responses as appropriate.
   - Obliging in answering any questions and providing information
   - A role model
   - Supportive
   - Critical friend
   - Competition
Appendix B.2 First Year Survey (continued)

21. How would you describe the other BLM student that you share your Mentor with? Choose as many responses as appropriate:
- Supervisor
- Critical friend
- Role model
- Coach
- Co-learner
- Guide
- Friend
- Assessor
- Colleague
- Other, please specify

22. Describe the interactions that you have in your EPL with the other BLM student.

23. What topics form the basis of conversations had with the other BLM student in your host class?
- University work - courses and assignments
- EPL - tasks and experiences
- Career advice
- Developmental advice
- Students in the host class
- Mentor Teacher
- Non-specific conversations
- Other, please specify
Appendix B.2 First Year Survey (continued)

Section 4 - About You

The following questions are gathering information about you.

24 Your age:
- 18 - 19
- 20 - 25
- 26 - 35
- 36+

25 Your gender:
- Female
- Male

26 Prior school experiences:
- My own schooling
- My children’s schooling
- Working in a school as a volunteer
- Working in a school in a paid position
- Other, please specify

27 Prior experiences of working with children or adolescents:
- Parent
- Teacher aide
- Childcare worker
- Coach (sports team)
- Instructor (skill is based)
- Teacher
- Other, please specify
Appendix B.2 First Year Survey (continued)

28. BLM program I am enrolled in:
   - Early Childhood
   - Primary
   - Secondary

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey.

Angolina Ambrosotti

Submit
Appendix B.3 Final Year Survey

Mentoring Perceptions in Embedded Professional Learning

This research survey seeks your perceptions about mentoring and your final year Embedded Professional Learning experiences. The information gathered will help to develop current mentoring practices in teacher education programs.

The survey will take approximately 15 minutes to complete.

In order to participate in this survey for my research, you will need to confirm and agree with the following points:

- I understand that participation in this survey is voluntary and anonymous.
- I understand that the information gathered during the research may be used within my doctorate dissertation and may be published in journals etc.
- I understand that if I decide to withdraw my survey responses after completing the survey that my responses are irretrievable due to the anonymous nature of this survey.
- I understand that I have the right to refrain from answering any questions without penalty should I wish to do so.
- I confirm I am over 18 years of age.

Thank you for your participation,

Angelina Ambrosoti (MLM CQU)
Doctor of Education Candidate

1. In order to begin the survey, please click on the agree button. By clicking on the agree button you are confirming that you understand the purpose of the survey and how the information will be used as listed above.

 Agree
 Disagree

Submit
Mentoring Perceptions in Embedded Professional Learning

Section 1 - Your perceptions about mentoring.

"Mentoring exists when a professional person serves as a resource, sponsor, and transitional figure for another person (usually but not necessarily younger) who is entering that same profession. Effective mentors provide mentees with knowledge, advice, challenge, and support as mentees pursue the acquisition of professional competence and identity" (O'Neil and Wrightsman 2001, p.113).

2. What does 'mentoring' mean to you?

3. In your Embedded Professional Learning (EPL) experiences, who has mentored you? Choose as many responses as appropriate.
   - My mentor teacher
   - The Lead Learning Manager
   - Another teacher at my Teaching School
   - Another ELM student
   - A university coordinator/lecturer
   - I have not been mentored by anyone

4. What have you achieved from your final year EPL experiences?
Appendix B.3 Final Year Survey (continued)

Section 2 - You and your Mentor Teacher
The following questions concern mentoring and your final year EPL Mentor Teacher.

5 To what extent do the following descriptors describe your Mentor Teacher?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Descriptor</th>
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<tr>
<td>Role model</td>
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<td>Coach</td>
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<td>Co-enquirer</td>
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<td>Instructor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assessor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advisor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colleague</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friend</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6 In terms of the mentoring definition provided, in what ways have you been mentored by your Mentor Teacher? Choose as many responses as appropriate:

- Directed me
- Supported me
- Guided me
- Advised me
- Helped me
Appendix B.3 Final Year Survey (continued)

7 During your final year EPL experiences, did your relationship change as time evolved? Please choose as many responses as appropriate.
- No, the relationship stayed exactly the same for the whole year.
- Yes, but I was still the student teacher with someone else's class.
- Yes, but the Mentor was still in charge.
- Yes, it became one that was cooperative and we worked together as a team.
- Yes, I became the teacher and the Mentor became my assistant.
- Other, please specify

8 Generally, what types of mentoring conversations occur between you and your Mentor Teacher? Choose as many responses as appropriate.
- About specific tasks I have performed
- About specific tasks I need to do with my students
- Reflection on completed class lessons
- Career advice
- Teaching strategies and approaches
- About students I have to teach
- Life and personal issues
- The work of a teacher
- Nurturing me as a professional
- Other, please specify

9 When do mentoring conversations take place between you and your Mentor Teacher during EPL?
Appendix B.3 Final Year Survey (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>1 never</th>
<th>2 once per day</th>
<th>3 twice daily</th>
<th>4 three times per day</th>
<th>5 more than four times per day</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ad hoc conversations during class time</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informal conversations at lunch time</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>During playground duty or bus duty</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planned or designated individual conversations at a specific time</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Before and/or after tasks have been performed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10 Who initiates the mentoring conversations?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 never</th>
<th>2 sometimes</th>
<th>3 regularly</th>
<th>4 much</th>
<th>5 extensively</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Myself</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentor Teacher</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11 What communication method is used in the mentoring conversations with your Mentor Teacher? Choose as many responses as appropriate.

- [ ] Face to face (at school)
- [ ] Face to face (elsewhere)
- [ ] By email
- [ ] By phone
- [ ] Web-based method such as Facebook
- [ ] Other, please specify

12 In the context of your final year EPLs, what aspect of mentoring is most important to you? Choose one response only.

- [ ] Someone who guides me
- [ ] Someone who supports me
- [ ] Someone who reassures me
- [ ] Someone who provides constructive feedback
- [ ] Someone who is a role model
Appendix B.3 Final Year Survey (continued)

13 To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about your final year experiences and your Mentor Teacher.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 Strongly disagree</th>
<th>2 Disagree</th>
<th>3 Neither disagree or agree</th>
<th>4 Agree</th>
<th>5 Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I was welcomed into the host class by my Mentor Teacher.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Mentor Teacher provided opportunities for me to complete the assigned portal tasks.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have had ample opportunities to become involved in the routines of the classroom and to practice teach.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My professional development needs were met in my host classroom.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I was given constructive feedback by my Mentor Teacher.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I was encouraged to reflect by my Mentor Teacher.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I was encouraged to risk take and try new teaching strategies out.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I had the freedom to be the type of Learning Manager I want to be.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

14 What are your roles in the mentoring relationship?


15 Describe your ideal mentoring relationship:


Appendix B.3 Final Year Survey (continued)

16 Thinking back to each of your EPL experiences in first, second and final year, do you think you have been mentored or supervised?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1 Mentored</th>
<th>2 Supervised</th>
<th>3 Neither</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First year EPL</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second year EPL term 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Year EPL term 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final year EPL</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

17 The research literature about mentoring discusses the matching of mentors and mentees. Matching includes the consideration of age, gender, experience, interests, etc. What do you think is important when matching a mentor and mentee?

Section 3 - You and other BLM students at your Teaching School

The following questions concern mentoring that may occur within/between you and other BLM students.

18 How important was it to have a group of final year BLM students at your Teaching School?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1 Not Important</th>
<th>2 Important</th>
<th>3 Essential</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

19 How have other final year BLM students at your Teaching School assisted you? Choose as many responses as appropriate.

- [ ] Not assisted me at all
Appendix B.3 Final Year Survey (continued)

- Clarified tasks and information with them so I could progress my own development.
- Gave me support when things were not going well.
- Were a 'sounding board' for ideas and thoughts.
- Gave me ideas and thoughts as to how to approach a situation or a lesson.
- Helped me to celebrate when things went well.
- Other, please specify

Section 4 - Mentoring other BLM students (Mentoring Triads)

The following questions focus on the concept of having a first year student in the same room as final year student.

20. In your opinion, what would the benefits of having a first year BLM student in the same classroom as you?

21. In your opinion, what would be the limitations of having a first year BLM student in the same classroom as you?

22. In your opinion, do you think you would be a mentor to the first year student along with the Mentor Teacher? If so what roles would you perform? Please choose as many responses as appropriate:
- No, I do not think I would be a mentor.
- Yes, I would encourage them to have a go.
- Yes, I would support their efforts in the classroom.
- Yes, I would answer their questions about University courses and assignments.
- Yes, I would give them advice about teaching (career and work of).
- Yes, I would model effective practice.
- Yes, I would direct them towards resources and materials.
Appendix B.3 Final Year Survey (continued)

- Yes, I would instruct them about how to teach.
- Yes, I would give them feedback.
- Yes, I would try to nurture them.

### Section 4 - About You

The following questions are gathering information about you.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Options</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>23 Your age:</td>
<td>18 - 19, 20 - 25, 26 - 35, 36+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 Your gender:</td>
<td>Female, Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 Prior school experiences:</td>
<td>My own schooling, My children's schooling, Working in a school as a volunteer, Working in a school in a paid position, Other, please specify</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other, please specify:


Appendix B.3 Final Year Survey (continued)

Prior experiences of working with children or adolescents:
- Parent
- Teacher aide
- Childcare worker
- Coach (sports team)
- Instructor (skills based)
- Teacher
- Other, please specify

BLM program I am enrolled in:
- Early Childhood
- Primary
- Secondary

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey.

Angelina Ambrosetti
Appendix C.1 Information sheet for triad participants

7 August 2009

Dear Mentor Teacher and BLM students,

As an Education Doctorate candidate with CQU, I am conducting a research project into triad mentoring experiences during the Embedded Professional Learning experience. Mentoring triads consist of a Mentor Teacher, a first year BLM student and a final year BLM student.

My research project focuses upon answering the following research question:

In the context of a mentoring triad, what are the roles of each of the participants and what interactions occur between the participants?

The research will be conducted using case study methodology. I will gather data through two methods:

- In-class observations of the mentoring triad – the observations will be scheduled at a time agreed to by participants. The focus of the observations will focus on how the triad participants interact with each other.

- Individual interviews with each member of the triad – the interviews will be conducted individually, at a time which researcher and triad member agree to. The focus of the interviews will be mentoring conversations between the members of the triad, roles of each participant in the triad, perceived benefits and limitations of the triad and how the triad functions.

Each triad participating in the research project will have a triad code and pseudonyms. The researcher will be the only person able to identify the participants and their responses. The research project intends to be unobtrusive, all observations and interviews will be negotiated with the participants.

The data gathered from the observations and interviews will be used in my dissertation and may also be used for journal publications.

Should you have any questions not covered by this information sheet, please contact me or my research supervisor Professor John Dekkers on 54407000.

Approval from Central Queensland University’s Human Research Ethics Committee has been granted. The approval number is H09/05-032. Please contact the Central Queensland University Office of Research (Phone number (07) 49232607 or email research-enquiries@cqu.edu.au) should there be any concerns about the nature and/or conduct of this research project.

Kind regards,

Angelina Ambrosetti M.Ed. (CQU)

Education Doctorate Candidate

Email: a.ambrosetti@cqu.edu.au

Central Queensland University - CRICOS Provider Code: QLD – 06019C, NSW – 03135J, VIC – 01624D
Appendix C.2 Consent form for triad participants

The Use of a Mentoring Triad in Professional Experience
Consent form for participants

This research project seeks to gather data about mentoring triads during the Embedded Professional Learning experience. The information to be gathered will be used in my dissertation and may also be used for journal publications. All participants and associated schools in the research project will be unidentifiable.

The research project consists of in-class observations and individual interviews. Permission to undertake this research in your school has been granted from the school’s Principal. In order to participate in this research project, you will need to confirm and agree with the following points:

- I understand that participation in the research is voluntary.
- I understand that my individual interview responses will be unidentifiable to all except the researcher.
- I understand that the information gathered during the research may be used within the researcher’s Doctor of Education thesis and may be published.
- I understand that I can withdraw from the research at any time.
- I understand that ethics approval has been gained for this research from CQUniversity’s Human Research Ethics Committee.

Participant Name:

Signature:

Please return this form by August 17 to:

Angelina Ambrosetti (Principal Researcher)
CQUniversity Noosa
PO Box 1128
Noosaville BC 4566
# Appendix C.3 Observation protocol

## Interaction Observations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interaction between:</th>
<th>□ Formal interaction</th>
<th>□ Informal interaction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>□ Mentor teacher</td>
<td>□ First year PST</td>
<td>□ Final year PST</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time &amp; duration of interaction:</th>
<th>Room of room used:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>□ Eye Contact:</td>
<td>□ Friendliness:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Body language:</th>
<th>Dominance (Who assumes control):</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>□ Mentor teacher</td>
<td>□ First year PST</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proximity of third members:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respectfulness of mentee towards mentor &amp; peer:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**What are they doing during the interaction?**

- Mentor:
  - First Yr:
  - Final Yr:

**Verbal conversations (substance of):**

**Who else is involved in the interaction?**
3.2 Interaction between:

- Mentor teacher
- First year PST
- Final year PST

Time & duration of interaction:

8:50 - 1min

Eye Contact:

Yes, direct

Body language:

Open, facing each other

Proximity of triad members:

Opposite sides of room
2 metres

Respectfulness of mentee towards mentor & peer:

Final yr in very respectful, but confident in her responses.

Interaction Observations

- Formal interaction
- Informal interaction

Part of room used:

MT at door
Final yr at carpet area
(opp sides of room)

Friendliness:

Authority voice by MT

Dominance (Who assumes control):

- Mentor teacher
- First year PST
- Final year PST

10/9/09
Appendix C.4 Example of completed observation protocol (continued)

What are they doing during the interaction?

• Mentor: Standing at door washing hands
  → observing what is happening in the room

• First Yr:
  At MT’s desk
  → watching, listening, occasionally looking through
  resources on MT’s desk

• Final Yr:
  With children on carpet explaining and giving instructions

Verbal conversations (substance off):
• MT asks final yr. about how the morning session will run (organisation)
• MT asks final yr. about what she is doing with the learners.
• Final yr. responds with an outline of the morning activities &
  explains the activity at hand.

Who else is involved in the interaction? N/A
### Appendix D.1 Interview schedule – first year pre-service teacher

**Interview Schedule - First Year Pre-service Teachers**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Describe what happens on a typical day visit</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Did you establish a relationship with your Mentor Teacher?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Do you think the relationship changed when the final year was also in the classroom?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. What was it like having a peer in the room with you?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Was the final year a good influence? Why/why not?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Was it beneficial having a final year in the same classroom?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. What was your role/position in the classroom?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. What were the roles of the Mentor Teacher?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. What were the roles of the final year?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Do you think you experienced mentoring or supervision?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Did you ever talk about the Mentor Teacher with the final year or the final year with the Mentor Teacher?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Appendix D.2 Interview schedule – final year pre-service teacher

## Interview Schedule - Final Year Pre-service Teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. How have you found this year’s EPL experiences?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Describe what happens on a typical day during EPL?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Did the EPL experience change at all when the first year student was in the classroom?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. What was it like having another BLM student in the classroom?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Do you feel you were a mentor to the first year? How?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Did your relationship change with your Mentor Teacher when the first year was in the classroom?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Do you think it was beneficial to have another pre-service teacher in your classroom?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Do you think you have experienced mentoring or supervision from your Mentor Teacher?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Did the Mentor Teacher mentor or supervise you?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix D.3 Interview schedule – mentor teacher

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1  How have you found the first and final year EPL experiences this year?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2  What were your roles as the mentor teacher?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3  How did you manage having two pre-service teachers in your classroom?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did having two pre-service teachers increase or decrease your workload?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4  Were there any difficulties with the triad?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5  What worked well in the triad?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6  Did the final year take on a mentoring role with the first year?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How and what roles?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7  Did you give any advice to the final year about mentoring the first year?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8  Was the final year a good influence/role model on the first year?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How/how not?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9  Would you consider this model of mentoring again? Why/Why not?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 What motivated you to have two pre-service students?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Do you think you mentored, supervised or used a combination of both?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix D.4 Example of an interview transcript

Interview transcript – Triad

1: How have you found the first and final year EPL experiences this year?
MTI: Really good, suitable and the final year helps the first year student.

1: Were there enough opportunities for both students?
MTI: I think sometimes the first year may feel a little isolated and think that they’re not going to get their own full go, having the final year there, my first year did confide in the final year and tell her that she was worried about that. That get fed back to me, so I could make sure that it was okay.

1: What were your roles as the mentor teacher?
MTI: To make sure that they were busy all of the time; that everybody knew what they had to do (and when and where), making sure that the day ran smoothly; to make sure that both of them had time to do their lessons; be there to support them and help them and make sure that they are on track all of the time.

1: How did you manage having two pre-service teachers in your classroom?
MTI: Probably increased the workload in a way, but once we knew each other and sorted it out, it all fell into place. But you do have to be organised and they need to know their jobs. Once the final year was going into more of a teaching role, some of the responsibility went off my shoulders and onto the final year. The final year was telling the first year what she had to do, there’s your spot, this is your lesson. The leadership role went from the mentor teacher to the final year. The final year mentored the first year then.

1: Were there any difficulties with the triad?
MTI: The thought of it was worse than the reality. Once you were into it, it has been a really good journey. No difficulties as such, some people might find it a difficulty, but I like to organise people so that they feel happy and can do their job. To make sure the kids benefit, the kids are the ones who benefit from having the extra pair of hands in the room. This year, I have got hardly any parent helpers so student teachers have been changing readers and doing the parent helper stuff too.

1: What worked well in the triad?
MTI: The group dynamics, their zest and youth, makes you feel like… its fun really. It keeps me almost with young people. The two girls seemed to gel and get on well together, so I don’t know it that happens every time.

1: Did the final year take on a mentoring role within the first year? How and what roles?
MTI: Very much so. During the internship, in the morning the final year would ask the first year what she had to do today, we’d sit you in here, let me look at your lesson plan, you could do this better. She offered the first year to email her lesson plan and she would help her to do something better, or tell her about a better way to do it. Often the final year would say to me I’ve told the first year she can do it this way. So she had a very good mentoring role. I think being a similar age group, they respond well together and they know the language to use with each other. As a matter of fact, with the final year, I used to bounce things off her, I would say, do you think this is too much to be asking a first year to do? So I did it that way as well, the final year was actually helping me the answer some of my questions, because there was a time where I had to tell somebody to lift their act, and everybody did it happily.
Appendix D.4 Example of an interview transcript (continued)

1: Did you give any advice to the final year about mentoring the first year?
MT: I think the final year was a bit concerned initially as she didn’t know how it would work, but it just sort of fell into place. I don’t know if I gave her any full directions, I might have said answer the questions or observe the lessons.

1: Was the final year a good influence/role model on the first year? How/how not?
MT: Perfect. She was the ideal, I don’t know if all final years would be, but she was great. The final year was honest, the feedback was critical, it was too the point, but she told her in a nice way how to fix things up and gave support in order to make it better.

1: Would you consider this model of mentoring again?
MT: Yes I would.

1: Is there anything that we need to do to set up a good mentoring relationship?
MT: I don’t know how you would do it. You know the students when they come through, perhaps you can, perhaps it’s the luck of the draw. It’s a challenge for them (participants) to figure out how they are going to work together. As a teacher in a school you are always going to work with people that you may or may not get along with, so you just have to learn how to do it.

1: What motivated you to have two pre-service students?
MT: Extra hands in the room and you get through more stuff/work/activities and the kids really benefit.

1: Do you think you mentored, supervised or used a combination of both?
MT: A combination of both. I think depending on where the level of students is at, how much you’ve got to do with either one. If the student was showing me that they weren’t getting their work done independently, then I would have to be very much a supervisor to get the work up to scratch. In a mentor way, I think you do both, depending on where the students are sitting, what their needs are.