**Induction of New and Beginning Teachers**

A Guide for Principals

**CONTENTS**

[Induction of new and beginning teachers 3](#_Toc459366658)

[Preparing and Pre-Commencement 3](#_Toc459366659)

[Preparing a Welcome Pack 5](#_Toc459366660)

[Planning an Orientation Day 5](#_Toc459366661)

[Choosing a buddy 5](#_Toc459366662)

[Laying Foundations 6](#_Toc459366663)

[Week One 6](#_Toc459366664)

[Weeks Two to Eight 7](#_Toc459366665)

[Mentoring beginning teachers 7](#_Toc459366666)

[Supporting the mentoring relationship 8](#_Toc459366667)

[Teacher Mentor Support Programs 8](#_Toc459366668)

[Registration 9](#_Toc459366669)

[Continuing Professional Growth 9](#_Toc459366670)

[Terms Two, Three and Four 9](#_Toc459366671)

[Year Two 9](#_Toc459366672)

[Evaluating your induction 10](#_Toc459366673)

## Induction of new and beginning teachers

By providing an effective induction for new and beginning teachers, principals can ensure that all teachers new to the school are promptly and effectively socialised into the school culture. Research shows that effective induction increases teacher efficacy, improves teacher retention and has a positive impact on student outcomes. Supporting teachers in the transition to either the teaching profession, a new school, a new sector or a new jurisdiction, allows them to seamlessly integrate into the school community, ultimately enabling them to more quickly reach their full potential.

Induction is much more than introductory activities or orientation. It sets the scene and ensures consistency in practice in and outside the classroom. For teachers who are new to the school, returning from a period of extended leave or are new to the Victorian teaching workforce an effective induction is usually completed during their first few weeks. For beginning teachers it is an ongoing process that continues throughout their first and second years as they develop their professional practice.

Ideally an effective induction reflects the individual school within the context of the broader network or community, is tailored to the needs of the new teacher and includes:

* opportunities to learn about the school and its community
* orientation to the profession including an introduction to codes of conduct and ethics, teaching standards, registration, the approach to performance and development, and information about professional development institutes
* any mandatory training, such as online Occupational Health and Safety modules and mandatory reporting obligation to protect children and meet child safe standards
* integration into Professional Learning Communities and the commencement of the Performance and Development cycle
* for beginning teachers, opportunities to develop their professional practice, and requires having an ongoing relationship with a mentor to develop their proficiency and obtain full registration.

## Preparing and Pre-Commencement

Induction begins prior to the commencement of teaching and includes orientation to the profession, the employer, and the school. It is important that these activities take place prior to the teacher taking up a new position to ensure new teachers feel welcome and develop realistic expectations about the position and the school.

The [AITSL's Australian guidelines for teacher induction into the profession](http://www.aitsl.edu.au/induction) identifies the following factors as important for new teacher induction approaches:

* *employing a range of strategies is more effective and the best programs include practiced focused mentoring, leadership contact, participation in collaborative networks, targeted professional learning, observation and reflection on teaching, practical information and time allocation.*
* *practised focused mentoring with expert colleagues is effective for developing profession practice and proficiency standards*
* *focus on four areas:* 
  + *professional practices: the knowledge and skills for effective teaching practice*
  + *professional identity: professional expectations, responsibilities and obligations*
  + *wellbeing: capacity to manage the personal demands of the profession*
  + *orientation: acclimatisation to the school’s culture, policies and procedures and its community[[1]](#footnote-1)*

The best induction programs include elements that address all four focus areas.

**Teacher Induction Focus area supports and strategies**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Professional practice**  Mentoring relationship  Time allocation  Leadership contact  Observation and reflection on teaching  Targeted professional learning  Collaborative learning networks  Communities of Practice  Professional Learning Communities | **Professional identity**  Codes of conduct  Professional standards  Mandatory reporting obligations  Online learning modules |
| **Wellbeing**  Assigning a buddy  Leadership contact  Collaborative learning networks  Communities of Practice  Professional Learning Communities  Peer networks | **Orientation**  Welcome pack  Orientation day  Assigning a buddy  Information about the school and its community  instructional model and pedagogical approach  policies and procedures  Strategic and Annual Implementation Plans  First day agenda and welcome |

Prior to commencement, the Principal or Professional Development Coordinator can prepare the welcome pack, choose and brief buddies and plan the orientation day. The welcome pack can be sent as soon as the appointment is made with an invitation to an orientation day for new staff, generally held during December, if the person is to start at the beginning of the next year.

Resources:

* AITSL’s [Graduate to Proficient: Australian guidelines for teacher induction into the profession](http://www.aitsl.edu.au/induction)
* [New Teacher Induction checklist](file://edugate.eduweb.vic.gov.au@SSL/DavWWWRoot/edrms/collaboration/LPPAD/PP/Mentoring%20and%20Induction/New%20Teacher%20Induction%20Plan%20Checklist%202016%20website%20refresh.docx)

## Preparing a Welcome Pack

A well designed welcome pack gives new staff the opportunity to look through key information about your school, prior to commencement, in their own time and prepare for discussions that they will have during face-to-face orientation. The contents of a welcome pack should be tailored to meet the needs of the individual and will depend on the job role and the new staff member’s previous work experience. Personalising the pack shows new staff that thought has been put into their arrival, that they are a valued member of the team and that their individual needs are recognised.

Resources:

* [Welcome Pack checklist](file://edugate.eduweb.vic.gov.au@SSL/DavWWWRoot/edrms/collaboration/LPPAD/PP/Mentoring%20and%20Induction/Welcome%20Pack%20Induction%20checklist%20for%20principals%202016%20website%20refresh.docx)

## Planning an Orientation Day

The purpose of an Orientation Day (prior to commencing at the school) is to introduce teachers to their new school and allow teachers at the school to meet their new team members. Many new teachers value this opportunity to do some preparation and it can ease the burden on busy staff at the beginning of a new year. It is important to represent the school, its students, parents and community in a positive light. New teachers should return feeling enthusiastic about the year ahead.

During the orientation day, new staff should be made aware of their class or teaching load and be able to meet with the Level Team Leader or Curriculum (Domain) Leader. They should also be introduced to their buddy.

The orientation information can also be compiled in an alternate format such as a video or DVD which captures the ethos of the school, priorities, who’s who, and the structure. Information can also be made available on the school’s intranet.

Resources:

* [Orientation day agenda](file://edugate.eduweb.vic.gov.au@SSL/DavWWWRoot/edrms/collaboration/LPPAD/PP/Mentoring%20and%20Induction/Orientation%20Day%20Agenda%20for%202016%20website%20refresh.docx)

## Choosing a buddy

The Principal or Professional Development Coordinator should allocate a [buddy](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/profdev/Pages/buddy.aspx) for each new teacher. Ideally the buddy will be teaching the same grade, and/or within the same Curriculum (Domain) Area/Professional Learning Team. The buddy’s role is to provide information and offer friendship and personal support to the new teacher during the initial 6-8 weeks of teaching. The role includes providing a practical orientation to the school and transmitting the culture of the school.

Schools usually appoint a buddy for the first few weeks of the new teacher’s appointment, later replacing them with a mentor for beginning teachers.

Principals may use their trained mentors as buddies, however buddies don’t need to have any specific training. The same person may fulfil both roles, switching from the buddy to the the mentoring role once the new teacher is comfortable with their new position.

A buddy does, however, need to be an excellent, successful teacher who is willing to take on the role. Not all excellent teachers are suited to offering this kind of support. Principals need to choose teachers carefully for their buddy role.

The qualities necessary in a buddy are:

* being available and willing to share their expertise
* being encouraging and optimistic
* being able to communicate their caring for students.

It is important that negative or dismissive attitudes are not passed on. Passionate commitment to improving student outcomes, good relationships with students, and acceptance and sound understanding of the school’s values and goals are vital in a buddy. Beginning teachers need sympathy and perspective along with practical advice on how to reduce stress during what can be an emotionally challenging time.

## Laying Foundations: a proposed timeline

## Week One

The first day is particularly important for new teachers. The program for the first day should set aside some time for administrative tasks as well as meeting with the principal, office staff, buddy and curriculum leaders. It is also important to allow opportunities for the new teacher to ask questions and clarify their expectations.

Ensure the agenda allows for:

* an introduction of all new teachers
* time for new teachers to meet with buddies and agree on the mode of contact during first 6-8 weeks
* time to meet with you and the office staff to introduce the new teachers – perhaps over morning tea – and complete administrative tasks
* time to meet individually with you to welcome them and to emphasise professional obligation such as codes of conduct and mandatory obligations to protect children and meet child safe standards
* most first day meeting agendas will include time with Team Leaders/Curriculum (Domain) Leaders.

During this first week, buddies continue to monitor the needs of new teachers, touching base at the end of each day and liaising with Team Leaders/Curriculum Leaders. New teachers will still be familiarising themselves with school procedures and policies and may have questions for their buddy.

It is a good idea for you to meet with new teachers towards the end of the first week to check-in on how their induction is going, check in on their progress with any required online training such as mandatory reporting to protect children and Occupational Health and Safety, assess their needs and liaise with Team Leaders/Curriculum Leaders to ensure appropriate and timely support is provided.

## Weeks Two to Eight

During the first six weeks buddies continue to support and orientate new teachers. Principals and Professional Development Coordinators should be selecting, training and allocating mentors for beginning teachers. For experienced teachers new to the school and returning teachers, principals and Professional Development Coordinators should decide what formal support and mentoring is required. The Professional Development Coordinator can organise professional learning to address identified needs using both informal school based and external expertise, where necessary.

You should also check that all mandatory training including any online modules such as child safe standards or Occupational Health and Safety has been completed.

## Mentoring beginning teachers

Quality teaching is consistently cited as a significant factor influencing learning outcomes. Supporting beginning teachers to reflect upon their teaching is critical in assisting teachers to develop their practice. Mentors play a key role in supporting beginning teachers to become active agents in analysing and improving their own practice and in doing so developing their identity as teachers.

Mentoring is a reciprocal professional relationship which not only helps to improve the professional practice of new teachers, but also provides opportunities for more experienced teachers to gain fresh perspectives.

Induction is one of the earliest stages within the continuum of teacher professional learning and is focused on supporting new staff to become a part of a community of learners. Mentoring is a central feature of successful teacher induction and offers more structured individualised support to beginning teachers. A mentor is someone with knowledge and experience, seen as a role model by other teachers, who engages with beginning teachers by exchanging honest constructive feedback.

Beginning teachers need:

* to feel that they are supported and included within a professional learning community
* to be matched with a mentor who can support the development of their practice and provide constructive feedback to encourage professional reflective dialogue
* common time to formally meet and work with a mentor
* opportunities to share teaching practice through peer observation and professional conversations
* regular and effective communication with, and support from, the principal or an educational leader.

## Supporting the mentoring relationship

Research indicates that the following elements need to be in place to ensure effective support for the mentoring relationship:

* Time allocation – a reduced allotment, time for mentoring activities, and time for professional learning activities with regular and timetabled meetings on a weekly or fortnightly basis
* A well-considered teaching load and class allocation, which takes into account the beginning teacher’s experiences and needs
* The position of an induction and mentoring coordinator recognised as a leadership position in the school
* The mentor and beginning teacher working in close physical proximity to one another
* It is recommended that the mentor and beginning teacher teach the same year level or subject area
* Beginning teachers may have more than one person who fills the role of mentor.

## Teacher Mentor Support Programs

A joint initiative run in partnership between the Department of Education and Training and the Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT), the Effective Mentoring Program aims to build the capacity of mentors to support beginning teachers through ongoing professional learning embedded in day-to-day practice. This builds the capacity and self-efficacy of the beginning teachers which has a positive impact on improving student learning outcomes.

Activities allow participants, in their role as mentors, to explore the practice of mentoring and how they can support beginning teachers to improve their teaching practice. More on the [Effective Mentoring Program](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/profdev/Pages/mentor.aspx).

## Registration

Formal VIT registration procedures will guide beginning teachers and their mentors. Provisional registration is granted to teachers who have yet to demonstrate that they have met the standards of professional practice required for full registration. More information on [Victorian Teacher Registration](http://www.vit.vic.edu.au/).

# Continuing Professional Growth

# Terms Two, Three and Four

For the rest of the first year the emphasis is on responding to individual professional learning needs. Regular catch-ups between the beginning teachers and mentors should continue, along with opportunities for observations.

The beginning teachers will participate in the regular team curriculum planning activities of the school. This will provide them with the necessary pedagogical and curriculum support. Both formal and informal professional learning opportunities should be provided in response to the feedback received from mentors.

Professional Development Coordinators will ensure that the requirements for [VIT registration](http://www.vit.vic.edu.au/registering-as-a-teacher) are being satisfied for all beginning teachers and that mentoring support is working well.

Arrangements should be put in place to support beginning teachers at the crucial times of [Parent-Teacher Conferences](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/profdev/Pages/conferences.aspx) and [Report Writing](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/support/Pages/tipsforwriting.aspx).

You should also make sure you have scheduled regular catch-ups with beginning teachers, ideally at least once a term, to check in on their progress, how their integration into the school is going and gain feedback on their induction and mentoring experience.

# Year Two

During the second year the beginning teacher should be participating fully in the life of the school. They will continue to work with their mentor, deepening their professional practice and collecting evidence to satisfy their full registration requirements. Professional Development Coordinators should continue to monitor their progress and provide informal and formal learning opportunities to support the development of their teaching practice.

It is a good idea to continue to have regular check-ins with beginning teachers and seek feedback on their progress and well-being. It is also a good opportunity to get their feedback on your school’s induction process now that they are integrated into the school and may feel more comfortable providing you with their views on what has worked well and areas that could be improved.

## Evaluating your induction

It is important to evaluate your induction and seek feedback from new teachers and mentors to assess how effective the approach has been and identify areas that can be improved or developed. This should be done at regular intervals and can be a mixture of informally seeking feedback on how the induction is going and or more formally approaches such as a survey. A suggested evaluation survey is provided [here](https://edugate.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edrms/keyprocess/teachers-induction/Shared%20Documents/Sample%20Induction%20Evaluation%20Survey.docx).

## Resources

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| **Downloads**  [Principals Induction Guide for New Teachers (word doc)](https://edugate.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edrms/keyprocess/teachers-induction/Project%20Docs/Principals%20Induction%20Guide%20for%20new%20teachers.docx)  [Guide for Beginning Teachers (PDF)](https://edugate.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edrms/keyprocess/teachers-induction/Project%20Docs/Induction%20into%20the%20Victorian%20Teaching%20Profession%20A%20guide%20for%20beginning%20teachers.pdf)  [Guide for Beginning Teachers (word doc)](https://edugate.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edrms/keyprocess/teachers-induction/Project%20Docs/Induction%20into%20the%20Victorian%20Teaching%20Profession%20A%20guide%20for%20beginning%20teachers.docx)  [Graduate to Proficient: Australian guidelines for teacher induction into the profession](http://www.aitsl.edu.au/docs/default-source/professional-growth-resources/Graduate-Proficient-Induction-Guidelines.pdf)  [VIT's Supporting Provisionally Registered Teachers: A guide to the evidence-based process for full registration](http://www.vit.vic.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0020/15419/PRTGuide_EvidenceBasedProcess_2016_v12final.pdf)  [Induction checklist](https://edugate.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edrms/keyprocess/teachers-induction/Shared%20Documents/New%20Teacher%20Induction%20Plan%20checklist.docx)  [Welcome Pack checklist](https://edugate.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edrms/keyprocess/teachers-induction/Shared%20Documents/New%20Teacher%20Induction%20Welcome%20Pack%20checklist.docx)  [Orientation day agenda](https://edugate.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edrms/keyprocess/teachers-induction/Shared%20Documents/New%20Teacher%20Induction%20Orientation%20Day%20Agenda.docx)  [A Reflective Guide to mentoring and being a teacher-mentor](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/school/teachers/profdev/Reflectiveguidetomentoringschools.pdf)  [A Learning Guide for Teacher Mentors](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/school/teachers/profdev/learningteachermentors.pdf)  [Mentoring in the New Millennium](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/school/teachers/profdev/newmillenniumarticle.pdf)  [Buddy checklist](https://edugate.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edrms/keyprocess/teachers-induction/Shared%20Documents/New%20Teacher%20Induction%20Buddy%20checklist.docx)  [Evaluation Survey](https://edugate.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edrms/keyprocess/teachers-induction/Shared%20Documents/Sample%20Induction%20Evaluation%20Survey.docx) |

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| **Quick Links**  **Professional Obligations**  [Codes of Conduct](https://edugate.eduweb.vic.gov.au/sites/i/Pages/production.aspx#/app/content/1936/) [DET's Values: A School Guide](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/hrweb/Documents/PublicSectorValues-SchoolGuide.pdf) [Protecting Children](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/health/protect/Pages/default.aspx) [VIT registration](http://www.vit.vic.edu.au/registering-as-a-teacher) [Australian Professional Standards for Teachers](http://www.aitsl.edu.au/australian-professional-standards-for-teachers)  **Professional Development**  [Performance and Development](https://edugate.eduweb.vic.gov.au/Services/Schools/SchoolStaffPerformanceDev/Pages/default.aspx) [Professional Learning Communities](https://edugate.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edrms/project/PLC/Pages/Home.aspx) Professional Learning Institutes   * [Victorian Institute of Teaching](http://www.vit.vic.edu.au/) * [Australian Institute of Teaching and School Leadership](http://www.aitsl.edu.au/) * [Bastow Institute of Educational Leadership](http://www.bastow.vic.edu.au/) * [Victorian Deaf Education Institute](http://www.deafeducation.vic.edu.au/Pages/home.aspx) |

**Working in the Public Education system**

[The Education State](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/educationstate/Pages/default.aspx)  
[The Framework for Improving Student Outcomes](https://edugate.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edrms/project/fiso/SitePages/Home.aspx)  
[The Department of Education and Training](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/department/Pages/default.aspx)  
[Regional Information and Contacts](https://edugate.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edrms/keyprocess/teachers-induction/Pages/reg-contacts.aspx)  
[Human Resources](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/hr/Pages/default.aspx)  
[EduPay](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/hrweb/pages/resources/eduPay.aspx)  
Online learning modules

* DET Values
* [Child Safe Standards: Mandatory reporting and other obligations](http://www.elearn.com.au/det/protectingchildren/schools/)
* [Occupational Health and Safety](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/management/Pages/ohsinduction.aspx)
* [Respectful Workplaces](https://edugate.eduweb.vic.gov.au/Services/HR/LDU/Respectful-Workplaces/Pages/Respectful%20Workplaces.aspx)
* [Procurement](http://elearn.com.au/deecd/procurement/)

1. AITSL’s Australian guidelines for teacher induction into the profession [↑](#footnote-ref-1)