

# **The Benefits and Challenges of Centralised Mentor Training.**

**Laura J. Chandler**

Griffith University, Student Success, Logan campus, Griffith University, University Drive, Meadowbrook QLD 4131,  
l.chandler@griffith.edu.au

Testimonial provided by Madeleine Ray, Mentor Leader, Griffith University

Since 2008, locally coordinated mentoring activities at Griffith University have been supported by a central service known as Mentoring@Griffith. The provision of centralised mentor training is one of the direct service strategies employed in the development of peer mentoring practice. In 2013, centralised training was provided to approximately half of the student mentors active across Griffith's five campuses (approximately 550 students). This presentation will explore the benefits and challenges in providing centralised mentor training on this scale.

Firstly, there is the ever present challenge of delivering a generic training curriculum which caters for mentoring programs across all disciplines and diverse student experiences, while preparing peer mentors to support students from a variety of backgrounds, including both international and domestic. This issue has been addressed by building the training curriculum using constructivist principles and a student centred approach. The challenge of meeting rapidly increasing demand has been addressed through the introduction of experienced mentors as training facilitators which also cements a strong student perspective within the training curriculum.

The benefits of centralised coordination will also be discussed including quality assurance supported by consistent monitoring and evaluation of curriculum content. Yearly review and development ensures continued improvement and effectiveness. Evidence for the efficacy of centralised mentor training has been gathered from a number of sources including feedback surveys administered to mentors before and after undertaking mentoring duties; data collected from commencing students (mentees) via university-wide survey mechanisms; research projects undertaken in partnership with academic staff who coordinate mentoring programs; and feedback from mentoring coordinators and training facilitators. Another benefit which will be discussed is the opportunity for liaison with mentoring practitioners during training preparation which enables relationship building and fostering of good practice. This presentation will explore the operations, outcomes, benefits and challenges of centrally coordinated student mentor training.

## **Key Words**

Mentoring, training, peer, support, constructivist, student-centred