



PEER ASSISTED TEACHING SCHEME (PATS)

Teachers Helping Teachers

Building Quality in Higher Education Units

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Office for
Learning & Teaching

What is PATS?

The Peer Assisted Teaching Scheme, or PATS, is a developmental and confidential process in which two or more colleagues within a faculty collaborate to reinvigorate, or challenge aspects of, a unit. Using a collegial approach, strengthened through a series of centrally delivered workshops and informal discussions over coffee, the partners develop an action plan to achieve identified goals.

There are four modes of operation for partnerships:

1. **Mentor-mentee partnership**—partnership focuses on the mentee's unit. The mentor supports the mentee in completing the workbook. Both partners undertake a peer observation of teaching.
2. **Reciprocal partnership**—partnership works together providing support and mentorship to each other in reinvigorating their individual units. Each partner completes their own workbook.
3. **Mentor-mentee group partnerships**— a group of mentees works with one mentor. Each mentee completes their own workbook and the mentor should participate in the peer observation of teaching task.
4. **Reciprocal group partnerships**— a small group works together as peer mentors. Each group member completes their own workbook.

There is no prerequisite that a mentor be more senior to a mentee; it may be that the mentor is chosen because they have experience in a particular area of teaching that the mentee wishes to learn about, e.g. blended learning, use of Camtasia etc.

The PATS process is divided into three stages: pre-semester, during semester and post-semester as outlined overleaf.

PATS Tasks

The PATS process involves participants completing seven tasks, prior, during and post semester.

Pre-semester tasks

1. Meet and greet — introduce yourself and meet your partner
2. Break down the barriers — consider the roadblocks preventing changes to the unit
3. Set goals — develop a specific action plan to achieve these goals

During semester tasks

1. Engage your students
 - Decide how to gather informal student feedback
 - Gather feedback
2. Engage your peers
 - Decide what to observe
 - Perform a peer observation of teaching
- Discuss feedback with your partner(s)
- Conduct a summary of feedback session with students
- Discuss the observation with your partner(s)
- Produce a joint statement

Post-semester tasks

1. Critically reflect on the semester and your goals
2. Performance planning — incorporate any changes into your professional development plan

Meetings with PATS Coordinator

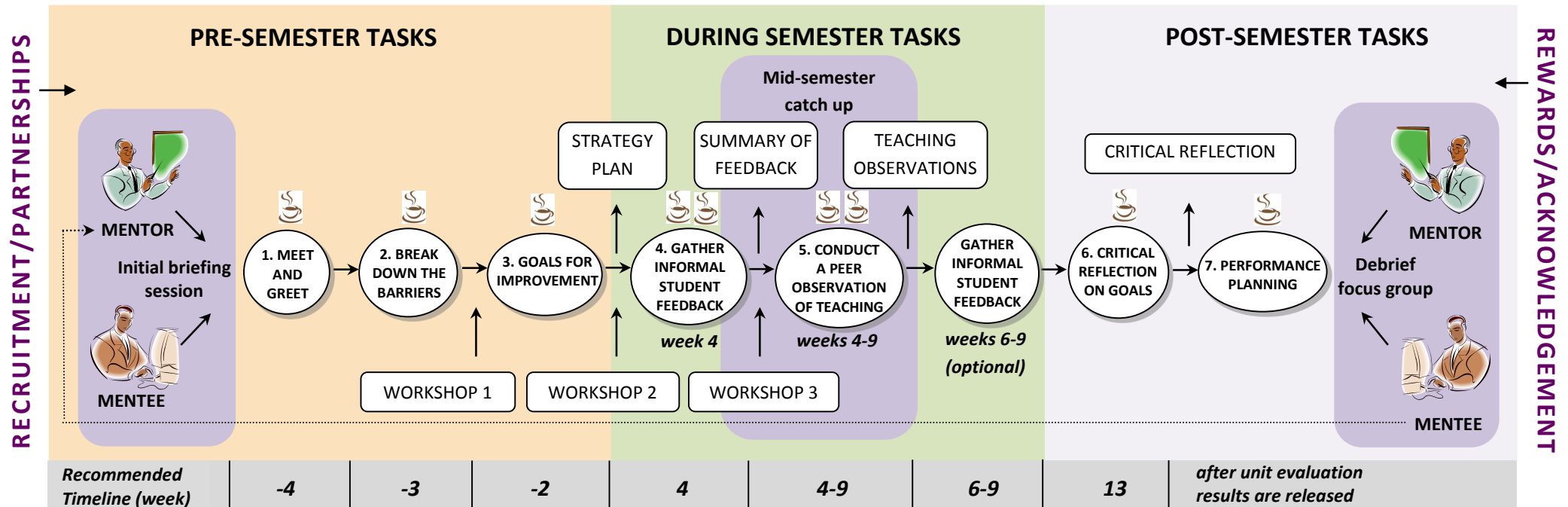
Each institution has a PATS Co-ordinator. The PATS Co-ordinator will: issue coffee vouchers; facilitate three meetings with the participants to support interaction; and recommend relevant centrally-delivered workshops.

1. Initial briefing — outlines the scheme, its aims and the tasks involved. Approx 1 hour.
2. Mid-semester catch up — meet to discuss progress and raise any issues you may have with completing the scheme. Approx 1 hour.
3. Debrief focus group — debrief your own experience with the process and give feedback on how the scheme could be improved for future participants. Mentors and mentees attend separate meetings. Approx 1.5 hours.



The PATS process

PATS is open to all academics and teaching associates. Drivers for participation in PATS might result from a poor unit evaluation, strategic educational directives from within your institution, aligning your unit with the AQF, course review, other feedback or new research emerging from the literature.



MEETINGS WITH PATS COORDINATOR

Academics are invited to be part of a PATS partnership. Partners, from the same faculty, meet with their PATS coordinator three times:

1. **Initial briefing** – outlines the scheme, its aims and the tasks involved.
2. **Mid-semester catch up** – meet to discuss progress and raise any issues.
3. **Debrief focus group** – debrief your own experience and give feedback.

INCENTIVES

A range of incentives may be made available, subject to individual faculty capacity. These may include coffee vouchers (to encourage partners to meet regularly), time relief and financial incentives where significant curriculum enhancement occurs.

WORKSHOPS

Participating institutions will identify relevant workshops or seminars available from their local department for academic development. These may cover topics such as peer observation of teaching, assessment strategies and curriculum alignment. Ongoing support and monitoring will also be provided by the PATS Coordinator to ensure the successful operation of the partnerships.

PEER MEETINGS

As part of the scheme, participants are expected to meet with their partner over coffee at least nine times and complete the seven workbook tasks. It is expected that at least three meetings will take place before the unit is next offered, at least four meetings should occur during semester and two after the semester has concluded.

Partners are expected to reflect on the unit, students' feedback, and examiner's report and review teaching materials in order to produce the following deliverables:

1. **An action plan** – identified goals and an associated action plan
2. **A summary of feedback** – identified areas of improvement which are fed back to the current cohort of students
3. **A peer observation of teaching** – including a summary of good practice observed and other issues that need attention
4. **Critical reflection** – a summary reflecting on the identified goals