



PEER ASSISTED TEACHING SCHEME (PATS)

Teachers Helping Teachers

Building Quality in Higher Education Units

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Australian Government



Office for Learning & Teaching

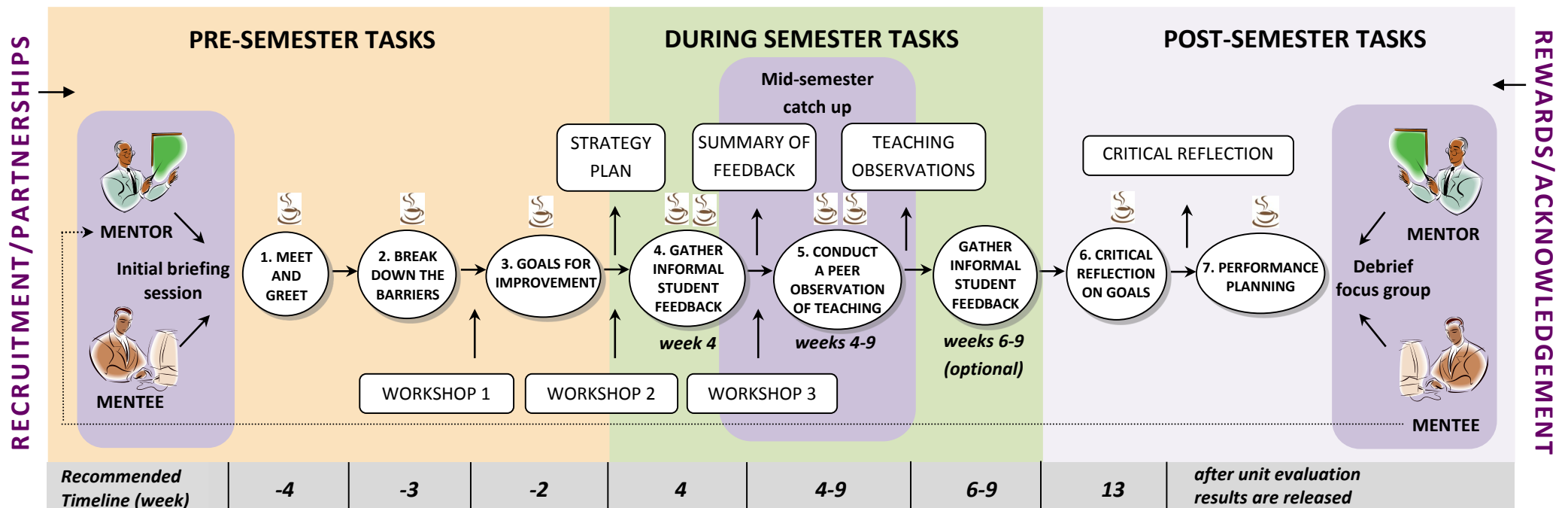
Course Quality Attributes

These course attributes are derived from a study of student feedback comments on aspects of courses that could be improved. The attributes are divided into categories and subcategories, and within each category the highlighted subcategory is the one that drew most comments in this study.

Category	Subcategory	Description
Course	challenge	The level of challenge and difficulty of the overall course
	content	The choice of topics that are covered in the course, including programming language used
	relevance	The real world scenarios in the course and whether the course is current
	structure	The way that components of the course are arranged
Lecturer	workload	The size and number of things to do in the course
	control	The amount of control the lecturer has over disruptive students in class
	knowledge	The amount of knowledge the lecturer portrays to the students
	organisation	The way the lecturer arranges the components of the lecture
Lecture	presentation	The level of engaging teaching methods used to deliver the material
	support	The lecturer's availability and attitude towards the students
	access	The ease with which the lecture materials can be reached by students
	challenge	The level of difficulty of the material
Tutor	content	The choice of topics and activities that are presented in the lecture
	delivery mode	The suitability of the mode of delivery
	duration	The amount of time allocated to the lecture
	structure	The logical sequencing of concepts
Tutorial	organisation	The way the tutor arranges the components of the tutorial
	presentation	The engaging teaching methods used to deliver the material
	response time	How quickly the tutor responds to students' queries
	support	The tutor's availability and attitude towards the students
Lab	alignment	The alignment of tutorial activities with course learning objectives
	clarity	The clearness of the requirements of the task
	length	The amount of time allocated to the tutorial
	scheduling	When the tutorial classes are scheduled
Assessment	structure	The logical sequencing of activities
	type of activity	The type of tutorial activity
	activity	The type of laboratory activity
	length	The amount of time allocated to the lab
	alignment	The alignment of assessment tasks with course learning objectives
	content	The choice of tasks covered by the assessment items
	difficulty	The level of difficulty of the assessment items
	feedback	The usefulness of the correspondence in relation to the assessment
	marking	Consistency of marking, quality of feedback, timeliness, and clarity of marking criteria
	organisation	Due dates and the allocation of marks to components of assessment
	practice	The amount of similar tasks students have experienced
	quantity	The number and size of assessments
specification	The clarity in which assignments were written, submission process and changing of requirements	
support	The assistance provided to students in relation to their assessment tasks	
timing	When in the teaching term the assessment items are issued and due	
availability	How accessible and ready for use a resource is	
content	The usefulness of the resources	
quantity	The amount of resources	
readings	The suitability of the readings	
LMS	ease of use	The simplicity with which materials can be found on the LMS
Off Campus	ease of study	The challenges students face when undertaking off campus courses
	support	The assistance provided to students studying in distance education mode

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