

# Pre and Post-Placement Interviews

One way to improve the quality of a professional experience placement is to conduct pre- and post-placement interviews with the pre-service teachers (PST).

## Who implements this strategy

Supervising Teacher (ST)

Professional Experience Co-ordinator (PEXC)

## How is it implemented?

- Prior to the commencement of each professional experience placement, individual interviews are conducted with each PST by the PEXC or their ST.
- The purpose of the pre-placement interview is to establish the expectations each PST has in relation to their placement: the nature of the experiences they will have; the time and effort they will be required to invest; the support they will receive; and the impact they will have on student outcomes.
- At the end of each placement, a second interview is conducted in order to establish:
  - Whether their expectations were met
  - Whether they found it necessary to adjust their expectations

## Variations:

- These interviews can be filmed with the permission of the participants if the school plans to retain it for future use, demonstrate impact or to show the PST at the second interview their professional growth.
- When multiple PSTs undertake their placements concurrently, focus groups may be conducted instead of individual interviews. Often the presence of other PSTs leads to very productive conversations.
- This information can be collected via a preplacement questionnaire and end of placement questionnaire.

## What are the benefits of implementing this strategy?

- For the PST: The PST is able to clearly articulate their expectations for their placement.
- For the PEXC: The PEXC is able to determine whether the expectations of the PST are closely aligned with those of the Supervising Teacher and take steps to reconcile the two if they are at odds. Post-placement interviews also allow the host school to reflect on the effectiveness of the services they offer to PSTs.

## Outcomes

- Steps can be taken to ensure that the expectations of the PST and their Supervising Teacher are aligned.
- The effectiveness of the placements offered by the host school can be monitored.

## Success indicators

- An indicator that the strategy is working as intended: The expectations of the PST and their ST are aligned. The PST expresses satisfaction with their placement.
- An indicator that the strategy is not working as intended: The expectations of the host school / ST are not being met. The PST is unsure about components of the placement and/or expectations.

## Resource: Interview questions

- At the beginning of the professional experience placement, PSTs are asked three specific questions:
  1. Identify (from your experience) the characteristics of a successful teacher.
  2. What do you understand or foresee to be the challenges of a teacher?
  3. What are your expectations of this placement?
  
- At the conclusion of the professional experience placement PSTs are asked the same three specific questions.
  1. At the beginning of the Induction Program you were asked to identify the characteristics of a successful teacher. List any modifications, additions or observations that you would make to this list as a result of your experience at XYZ School.
  
  2. After your experiences at XYZ School, comment on any modifications, additions or observations you would make regarding the challenges of a teacher.
  
  3. In what ways did this placement meet, fall short or exceed your expectations? (Please identify experiences which you found helpful as well as suggestions for improvement)