



## Starting strong: Quality Teaching Rounds for beginning teachers

Teaching is a complex yet rewarding profession. However it is a stark reality that many early career teachers feel overwhelmed by the demands of the role, sometimes leaving the profession prematurely. There are many forms of support currently available to new teachers, including mentoring and induction programs. These can be useful but it's the opportunity to observe experienced colleagues that beginning teachers say is most helpful for their development.<sup>1</sup> However, such opportunities are rare.<sup>2</sup>

Quality Teaching Rounds is a collaborative form of professional development that offers strong

support for beginning teachers. It provides opportunities to observe a diverse range of colleagues and engage in meaningful, rich analysis of teaching in a safe and nurturing environment.

Working in professional learning communities (PLCs), usually involving four teachers, all participants teach a lesson which is observed by the other PLC members. Each lesson observation is followed by sustained conversation and deep analysis of teaching practice using the QT Model.

A commitment to confidentiality enables PLC members to discuss their practice without

feeling judged and to develop greater confidence and stronger professional relationships.

### Key points

Quality Teaching Rounds helps beginning teachers:

- build strong collegial relationships
- feel less alone
- develop a deeper understanding of quality teaching
- gain confidence.

---

## What do beginning teachers say about Quality Teaching Rounds?

Studies conducted by the University of Newcastle have explored the impact of QTR on beginning teachers' confidence, quality of teaching and capacity to learn with and from colleagues.<sup>3</sup> Beginning teachers report having clearer direction for their work and a deeper commitment to delivering good teaching. QTR helps develop their pedagogy and supports their growth as teachers. Before QTR, many beginning teachers said they had no clear idea of whether they were teaching well or not and were hesitant to speak up among their more experienced colleagues. But after QTR, things changed.

**"I think that's what's made it most powerful... having the conversations about what makes good teaching."**

**Jacinta,  
beginning primary teacher**

Participation in QTR helps beginning teachers feel more confident and able to relate to their colleagues as peers.

**"I see myself as a colleague... It's not like, 'Okay, they've got x amount of years of experience, who am I to provide input?' It kind of makes me feel like we're on a level playing field."**

**Bree,  
beginning primary teacher**

Feelings of isolation are not uncommon among beginning teachers. QTR fosters relationships between teachers, helps them feel less alone and enables the sharing of practice.

**"You're in your own classroom. You're in your own world. Nobody comes in... You've got nobody to kind of validate that what you're doing is right, is wrong, or that you are doing something fantastic... With QTR you're not feeling so insular."**

**Josh,  
beginning primary teacher**

After QTR, beginning teachers say they work differently with their students, having a greater sense of control as well as a greater desire to teach and remain in teaching.

**"I can see why...early career teachers do burn out, because they come in with this passion, this desire, they learn all this great stuff at uni and how it should really work and they're confronted with reality. It's sort of like two worlds...I've realised there's so much that I still have to learn as a result of doing QTR..."**

**Yasmin,  
beginning secondary teacher**

There's no denying that the first years of teaching can feel overwhelming and present many challenges. QTR provides vital pedagogical and collegial support for beginning teachers in a way that not only empowers and uplifts but builds the foundations for a long and enjoyable teaching career.

---

### REFERENCES

- <sup>1</sup>McKenzie, P., Weldon, P., Rowley, G., Murphy, M., & McMillan, J. (2014). *Staff in Australia's Schools (SiAS) 2013: Main report on the survey*. Retrieved from Australian Council for Educational Research website.
- <sup>2</sup>Atkins, K., Banks-Santilli, L., Elliot, P., Guttenberg, N., & Kamill, M. (2006). Project quest: A journal of discovery with beginning teachers in urban schools. *Equity and Excellence in Education, 39*(1), 65–80.
- <sup>3</sup>Gore, J. M., & Bowe, J. M. (2015). Interrupting attrition? Reshaping the transition from preservice to inservice teaching through Quality Teaching Rounds. *International Journal of Educational Research, 73*, 77–88. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijer.2015.05.006>



### Contact us

qtacademy.edu.au  
qtacademy@newcastle.edu.au  
02 4055 7579

---