

The AVETRA Mentoring Register – *mentoring new researchers*

To be placed on the mentor register, mentors will have **experience** in supervising Higher Degree research students and/or have track record of managing VET research projects for NCVER, or equivalent.

AVETRA has built a **register** of potential mentors to support the scholarship holders within the NCVER communities of practice. The location of the mentor and the needs of the new researcher will be primary criteria for mentor selection. Both mentor and new researcher will have to agree to any proposed mentoring partnership.

The **aim** of the mentoring relationship will be to support the scholarship holder develop, complete and write up their VET research project. The scheme will be based upon four meetings a year between the mentor and the new researcher.

The mentoring **contract** asks the mentor and new researcher to simply confirm the following annual objectives;

- Contact details
- New Researcher details
- Four provisional meeting dates agreed
- Objectives agreed – from suggested list
- Roles performed by mentor – from suggested list

In each year of the scheme mentors will be paid an **honorarium of \$600** on the completion of the mentoring contract.

Each new researcher will have different needs, so the **mentoring role** may include being a teacher, guide, motivator, coach, advisor, sponsor, role model, referral agent, door opener. The activity may include:

- Plan personal research development program – guidance
- Plan research processes – goal setting
- Support reflection about research experiences – sounding board
- Review research progress – critical friend
- Offer alternative solutions to research issues – options for problem solving
- Respond to questions about research activity – knowledge development
- Offer advice about research actions within area of expertise - offer knowledge
- Indicate key sources of advice within the research network – expand network
- Introduce new researcher to cross institutional network colleagues – referral agent

- Indicate how to access key sources of research knowledge – open doors
- Offer advice about accessing further research training - suggestions

Selection of mentors

- The **location** of the mentor and the **needs** of the new researcher will be primary criteria for mentor selection.
- The relationship must be new researcher driven and mutually agreed by the new researcher and the mentor.

Outcomes from the Scheme

Even after the first year of operation we can reflect on significant *formative achievements*.

- A pool of experienced researchers have formed a significant potential resource for budding VET researchers and signal a pathway for new VET researchers.
- The two cohorts of 21 participants have formed and carried out their projects experiencing the full range of researcher experiences, gaining valuable emotional and practical learning.
- Experienced VET researchers have experienced the process of tutoring new members in the field, themselves learning from this experience.
- New researchers have made a significant contribution at the AVETRA, OctoberVET and NCVER conferences, extending the research community and establishing an integrated pathway for new researchers.
- NCVER will be publishing the completed project findings from the new researchers projects.
- AVETRA has added another role to the range of activities that unite and develop the VET research community.
- The interaction between new researchers, AVETRA, and NCVER has strengthened and coordinated the sector, produced materials and processes that will continue to foster researcher growth within the sector.
- Finally, the practical projects undertaken have raised the capability of participants, illuminated the role of research within their institutions and organisations, and will make some contribution to the stock of VET research knowledge.

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