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Building Capacity for Quality Teaching in Australian Schools

School Principal Information Statement

Dear Principal,

Your school is invited to participate in the research project identified above which is being conducted by Laureate Professor Jenny Gore and her colleagues within the Teachers and Teaching Research Centre at the University of Newcastle.

This project is funded by The Paul Ramsay Foundation and has been approved by the Victorian Department of Education and Training.

Why is the research being done?

Quality Teaching Rounds (QTR) is an approach to teacher professional development that involves teachers working in groups of four or more (known as a Quality Teaching Team) to observe and analyse each other's teaching using the Quality Teaching model. Quality Teaching Rounds has proved successful throughout New South Wales, where it has been found to improve teaching quality, increase teacher morale, and generate improved student outcomes.

This research will replicate a previous study conducted in New South Wales to investigate whether participation in Quality Teaching Rounds leads to similar positive results within Victorian schools that have not previously participated in QTR. Further information about Quality Teaching Rounds is available [here](#)

Who can participate in the research?

This research is open to 90 Victorian secondary schools. The first 90 schools to respond will be selected to participate in the research. Any secondary school in Victoria can take part, providing they meet the eligibility criteria below:

Teachers

Four teachers within each participating secondary school are invited to participate. The four participating teachers must include:

- At least one Year 8 Maths teacher
- At least one Year 8 English teacher

The participating Year 8 Maths/English teachers must also have at least 15 students in Year 8.

The other two participating teachers can be working across any year level and specialisation, however if you have more than one Year 8 Maths teacher and/or more than one Year 8 English teacher willing to participate that is preferable.

Teachers wishing to take part in the research must not have previously participated in Quality Teaching Rounds.

If more than four teachers from your school volunteer to participate, please select the first four eligible teachers who return a completed consent form to your school office.

Students

This research is also open to students taught by the participating Year 8 Maths and English teachers from your school.

What will participants be asked to do?

This research is a Randomised Controlled Trial, comprising 3 separate phases (Baseline data collection, Intervention, and Post-Intervention data collection). Each stage is explained below:

Baseline Data Collection (Term 1, 2022)

During Baseline data collection, we will collect the following data from the four participating teachers, as well as students of any Year 8 Maths and English teachers who have chosen to participate in the research.

Participant	Activity	Description	Duration
Teachers	Efficacy and wellbeing survey	Online survey asking teachers about their ability to perform different parts of their job, and about their morale and wellbeing.	10 mins
Students of participating Year 8 Maths/English teachers *	Self-efficacy and aspiration survey	Online survey asking students about which parts of school they enjoy and their educational and vocational plans for the future.	15 mins
	Progressive Achievement Tests	Standard student assessments in maths and reading	40 mins each

** Schools are asked to administer baseline student tests and surveys sometime between weeks 4-8 of Term 1. Baseline student assessments will comprise PAT Maths (level 7) and PAT Reading (level 8).*

Intervention (Term 2, 2022)

During the intervention phase, the four participating teachers will be randomly allocated to one of the following two groups:

Group	Activity	Duration
1. Quality Teaching Rounds (QTR) group	Attend a Quality Teaching Rounds workshop <i>(provides teachers with an explanation of the Quality Teaching Model and an understanding of the Quality Teaching Rounds process)</i>	QTR workshop = 2 days <i>(minimum of 2 teachers per school to attend)</i>
	Participate in a set of Quality Teaching Rounds. <i>A member of the research team will visit the school during one Round to conduct an implementation fidelity check.</i>	Quality Teaching Rounds = 1 day per round x 4 rounds <i>(all four teachers per school to participate)</i>
2. Wait-list control group*	Teachers assigned to the wait list control group will continue with their usual in-school professional development.	N/A <i>*Teachers assigned to the wait-list control group will have the opportunity to participate in QTR at the end of the study. A QTR training workshop will also be provided.</i>
Both groups	Teacher survey	10 mins

Post-intervention data collection (Term 3, 2022)

Participant	Activity	Description	Duration
Teachers	Efficacy and wellbeing survey	Online survey asking teachers about their ability to perform different parts of their job, and about their morale and wellbeing.	10 mins

Post-intervention data collection (Term 4, 2022)

During the post-intervention data collection stage, the four participating teachers and the students of participating Year 8 Maths and English teachers will repeat the measures they completed at the start of the study.

Participant	Activity	Description	Duration
Teachers	Efficacy and wellbeing survey	Online survey asking teachers about their ability to perform different parts of their job, and about their morale and wellbeing.	10 mins
Students of participating Year 8	Self-efficacy and aspiration survey	Online survey asking students about which parts of school they enjoy and their educational and vocational plans for the future.	15 mins
Maths/English teachers	Progressive Achievement Tests	Standard student assessments in maths and reading	40 mins each

** Schools are asked to administer post-intervention student tests and surveys sometime between weeks 2-6 of Term 4. Post-intervention student assessments will comprise PAT Maths (level 8) and PAT Reading (level 9).*

Note – *If your school already administers Progressive Achievement Tests as an internal student assessment tool, then we will not require students to repeat these tests solely for the purposes of the research. We will instead seek their consent to access the results from your school-administered Progressive Achievement Tests.*

Supporting data collection

To assist us recruiting participants and collecting data for our research, we would ask that you or your school office provide assistance with the following administrative tasks:

Administrative task	Approx. Duration
Distribute recruitment materials to teachers via email	5 mins
Send an email to those teachers from your school who returned a consent form, advising them as to which four teachers you have selected to participate, and acknowledging any teachers who could not be accommodated on this occasion.	5 mins
Collect, scan and return the completed Principal and four Teacher consent forms to the research team. <i>The four teachers from your school must include at least one Year 8 maths teacher and one Year 8 English teacher.</i>	10 mins
Distribute the research information letter to Parents/Carers of students taught by participating Year 8 Maths and English teachers	5 mins

Notify Parents/Carers about the research within your school newsletter or other internal communications (we will provide you with suggested newsletter wording)	10 mins
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We would ask that you please assist with the following:

- Permit the four participating teachers to complete the teacher surveys during school time.
- Ensure that students taking part in the research have access to computers when completing the Progressive Achievement Tests and online survey.

School Reimbursement

All participating schools will be funded with \$7000 towards the cost of teacher release whilst participating teachers attend a QTR workshop and participate in Quality Teaching Rounds.

- Schools allocated to the intervention group will receive teacher release funding in 2022
- Schools allocated to the control group will receive teacher release funding in 2023.

For schools that do not have access to online PAT testing, the research project will provide access for the duration of the study.

What choice do you have?

The participation of your school in this research is entirely your choice. Whether or not you consent for your staff and students to participate, your decision will not disadvantage you.

Teacher participation is also entirely voluntary, and teachers can choose whether or not they wish to participate, regardless of any decision by the school.

Student surveys and Progressive Achievement Tests are entirely optional. Students and their parents will be asked to co-sign a consent form if they are willing to take part in the research. Only those students who consent will be asked to complete the Progressive Achievement Tests and surveys. *Teachers will be asked to arrange alternative learning activities for those students who do not wish to participate.*

Student participants (or their parents) can also withdraw their consent at any time up to the point at which the student data is collated and aggregated. You and your staff can also discontinue participation in the research at any time.

What are the risks of participating?

There are no anticipated risks to you or your school, staff or students in participating in this research.

- **Teachers** – The Quality Teaching Rounds protocol is designed to ensure that teacher discussions following each round are positive and constructive, with an emphasis on the observed teaching, rather than the individual teacher. In the unlikely event that teachers find any components of the research to be upsetting, they can withdraw at any time. Teachers can also contact their Employee Assistance Program on 1800 604 640 or call Lifeline on 13 11 14.

- **Students** – The student Progressive Achievement Tests (PATs) consist of basic maths, science and literacy questions. These are not a test of the students, but of the efficacy of the different training mediums of Quality Teaching Rounds, compared to alternative forms of teacher Professional Development. The student survey will ask students about life at school. The survey does not contain any sensitive or upsetting questions. We therefore do not anticipate any risks to the students in participating in this research. However, in the unlikely event that students find the research to be upsetting they can withdraw at any time or can call Kids Helpline on 1800 55 1800.

What are the benefits of participating?

The anticipated benefits for participating teachers are considerable. Quality Teaching Rounds has been found to increase teaching quality and improve teacher confidence. Teachers have also reported being refreshed and re-energised through their participation in QTR.

We cannot guarantee any direct benefits to students who participate in this research. However, our previous research found that students of teachers who participated in Quality Teaching Rounds saw an increase in learning growth by as much as 25%.

The data we collect will also help us to improve teaching for all students, now and into the future.

How will participant privacy be protected?

At the beginning of the research, participating teachers will be asked to complete a student information document, consisting of each participating student's name, date of birth, and other key demographic information that will help us to analyse the data we collect.

Each participating student be asked to enter a student username at the beginning of their Progressive Achievement Tests (PATs) and surveys.

- If your school already conduct PATs as part of your usual student assessment activities, then your participating students should use the same username when completing the PATs and surveys for our research.
- If your school does *not* already conduct PATs then we will provide you with a PAT licence and a username for each participating student, so that they can complete the PATs and surveys.

In schools where students complete Progressive Achievement Tests as part of their usual assessment activities, the research team will only obtain PAT results for those students who provide a completed parent/student consent form. The company that administers the PATs (ACER) will provide the student test results to the research team via a password-protected cloud file, accessible only to members of the research team.

Teachers will be asked to enter their name on their own surveys so that we can match their responses to their subsequent surveys - however, this information is entirely confidential, and no teachers will be named or identified within our research outcomes.

During the data collection phase, any information collected by the researchers which identifies the participating teachers or students, will be stored securely and only accessed by the researchers unless you consent otherwise, except as required by law.

Once data analysis is complete all participant identifiers will be deleted.

How will the collected data be securely stored?

Online surveys will be administered through Qualtrics, and protected in accordance with their security and privacy policies available via the following links:

Qualtrics Security Statement - <https://www.qualtrics.com/security-statement/>

Qualtrics Privacy Policy - <https://www.qualtrics.com/privacy-statement/>

All data will be retained securely for a minimum period of 5 years from completion of the research and managed/stored in accordance with the University's Research Data and Materials Management Guideline (see <https://policies.newcastle.edu.au/document/view-current.php?id=72>) or any successor Guideline, and applicable University of Newcastle policy provisions (as amended from time to time). Access to any identifiable data will be limited to members of the research team, unless you have consented otherwise, except if required by law. Once the data is no longer required, it will be securely deleted from any online server.

How will the information collected be used?

Collected data will be used for research publications and presentations. The data may also be used in future research projects. A summary of the research outcomes will also be provided to the research sponsors.

Individual participants will not be named within any reports arising from the project without their express consent.

- Student Progressive Achievement Test results will be available to you directly (via the ACER testing site) and can be accessed using your assigned school log-in, to allow you to generate a report of each participating student's PAT results for your school's own internal diagnostic student assessment purposes.
- Student survey responses will not be made available to participating schools directly, but overall aggregated survey responses across all participating schools will be detailed within our research summary.

The contact details of participating teachers may be used by the research team to invite them to participate in future research, subject to their consent. Non-identifiable data may also be shared with other parties to encourage scientific scrutiny, and to contribute to further research and public knowledge, or as required by law. You can request a summary of the results of this research can be requested by emailing the project team at gtr-vic@newcastle.edu.au

What do you need to do to participate?

Please read this Information Statement and be sure you understand its contents before you consent to participate. If there is anything you do not understand, or you have questions, please contact the research team.

If you would like your school to participate in this research, please email your completed School Principal Consent Form to gtr-vic@newcastle.edu.au

Further information

If you would like to ask any questions about the project, please do whichever of the following suits you best:

- Visit our website www.newcastle.edu.au/QTR
- Email the project team at gtr-vic@newcastle.edu.au
- Call us on (02) 4985 4300

Thank you for considering this invitation.



Laureate Professor Jenny Gore
Chief Investigator

Co-Investigators

Associate Professor Jess Harris
Dr Leanne Fray
Dr Sally Patfield
Dr Drew Miller
Dr Tim Kelso
Dr Sarah Richardson
Dr Alex Daraganov
Dr Nathan Zoanetti
Dr Pauline Taylor-Guy
Dr Martin Murphy
Dr Tim Friedman
Nora Kovarcikova

Project Managers

Tim Dean
Terina Vale

Research Assistant

Matthew Harper

Complaints about this research

This project has been approved by the University's Human Research Ethics Committee, Approval No H-2021-0108
Should you have concerns about your rights as a participant in this research, or you have a complaint about the manner in which the research is conducted, it may be given to the researcher, or, if an independent person is preferred, to the Human Research Ethics Officer, Research Services, NIER Precinct, The University of Newcastle, University Drive, Callaghan NSW 2308, Australia, telephone (02) 4921 6333, email Human-Ethics@newcastle.edu.au

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School Principal Consent Form

I consent to my school participating in the above research.

I understand that the project will be conducted as described in the Information Statement, a copy of which I have retained.

I understand that my school's participation in this research is voluntary, and that I can withdraw organisational consent at any time.

I understand the participation of my staff and students is also voluntary, that they can withdraw from the project at any time, and do not have to give any reason for withdrawing.

I also consent to:

- Permit teachers and students from my school who wish to do so, to participate in the research during school time.
- Provide access to computers for students to complete online surveys and assessments.
- Disseminate (via the school office) Parent/Student Information Statements and Consent Forms to the parents of students taught by participating Year 8 Maths and English teachers from within my school.

I understand that the personal information of participating teachers and students will remain confidential to the researchers except as required by law

I have had the opportunity to have any questions answered to my satisfaction.

Name	
School	
E-mail	
Tel	
Date	
Signature	
Does your school already have a licence to conduct Progressive Achievement Tests?	
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

In addition to granting Organisational Consent, if you yourself would also like to participate in the research as one of the four nominated teachers from your school, please tick this box.