

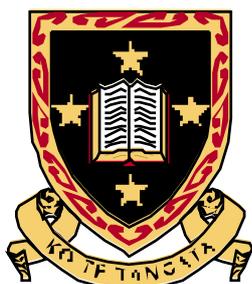
*An Evaluation of
TE RAU PUAWAI
WORKFORCE 100*

Academic mentors perspectives

technical report no. 5

Prepared for the Ministry of Health

By



**The
University
of Waikato**
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o Waikato*

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May 2002

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Summary

To evaluate the Te Rau Puawai programme, the Ministry of Health commissioned the Maori and Psychology Research Unit of the University of Waikato in July 2001. The overall aim of the evaluation was to provide the Ministry with a clearer understanding of the programme including: the perceived critical success factors, the barriers if any regarding Te Rau Puawai, the impact of the programme, the extent to which the programme may be transferable, gaps in the programme, and suggested improvements.

As an integral component of the Te Rau Puawai programme and as a specialised source of support, academic mentors were identified as an important group to receive comment from. This report documents the evaluative exchange that occurred by way of email questionnaire, that we had with 18 out of 46 academic mentors of Te Rau Puawai bursars in the College of Humanities and Social Sciences responded to our questionnaire.

A number of findings are highlighted below:

- Most mentors mentored one or two bursars per year but some had in excess of seven.
- On average, mentors were in contact with their allocated bursars once or twice a semester although for some this was more frequent.
- The types of support felt to be afforded from the mentor/bursar relationship were: access to academic resources, a space and time for reflection and feedback, the opportunity to encourage and enhance the esteem of bursars, and a sense of collegiality, this being important to creating a sense of belonging and community.
- Suggested improvements included mentors taking more proactive steps in establishing and structuring contact with bursars.
- Mentors identified some challenges to the role of mentoring. These challenges included the need to be aware of the power differential between mentors and bursars.

... one of greatest pleasures of the job is encountering students who are wanting & willing to learn, to explore critically and to engage in the production of knowledge; its neat to chew the fat with such people [A Te Rau Puawai Mentor].

Table of contents

Summary	i
Table of contents	ii
Introduction.....	1
Brief Overview of Te Rau Puawai.....	1
Academic mentoring.....	2
Evaluation objectives.....	3
Method.....	4
Participants and procedure.....	4
Data analysis.....	4
Ethical issues.....	5
Findings.....	6
Contact between Mentors and Bursars.....	6
Impact of the mentoring role.....	6
Unsure/Don't know	7
Academic support	7
Reflection and feedback.....	8
Encouragement and Esteem.....	8
Collegiality.....	9
Suggested improvements	9
Initiating mentor-bursar contact.....	9
Maintaining contact.....	10
Challenges to mentoring	10
Te Rau Puawai Coordination.....	11
Conclusions.....	11
References.....	13
Appendix 1 Information sheet and questionnaire.....	14
Appendix 2 Mentor ideas for improving the mentoring relationship.....	16
Appendix 3 List of technical reports.....	19

Introduction

Brief Overview of Te Rau Puawai

Te Rau Puawai is a workforce development programme aimed at assisting Maori who have a strong interest in Maori mental health, gain tertiary qualifications relevant to the mental health field. Since 1999, Massey University, in partnership with the Ministry of Health, have combined to offer a selected group of Maori students (bursars) support throughout their study. The Ministry of Health is the funding agency and Massey University provides various support resources for the student's programme of study. The goal of Te Rau Puawai is to enable 100 Maori to successfully complete and gain relevant mental health related academic qualifications by 2003. This objective is to be achieved through the provision of bursaries and academic and learning support (mentoring and study programme) for Maori students enrolled in appropriate programmes within the College of Humanities and Social Sciences at Massey University. Bursars study courses from a number of mental health related disciplines such as social work, nursing, rehabilitation, psychology and Maori studies.

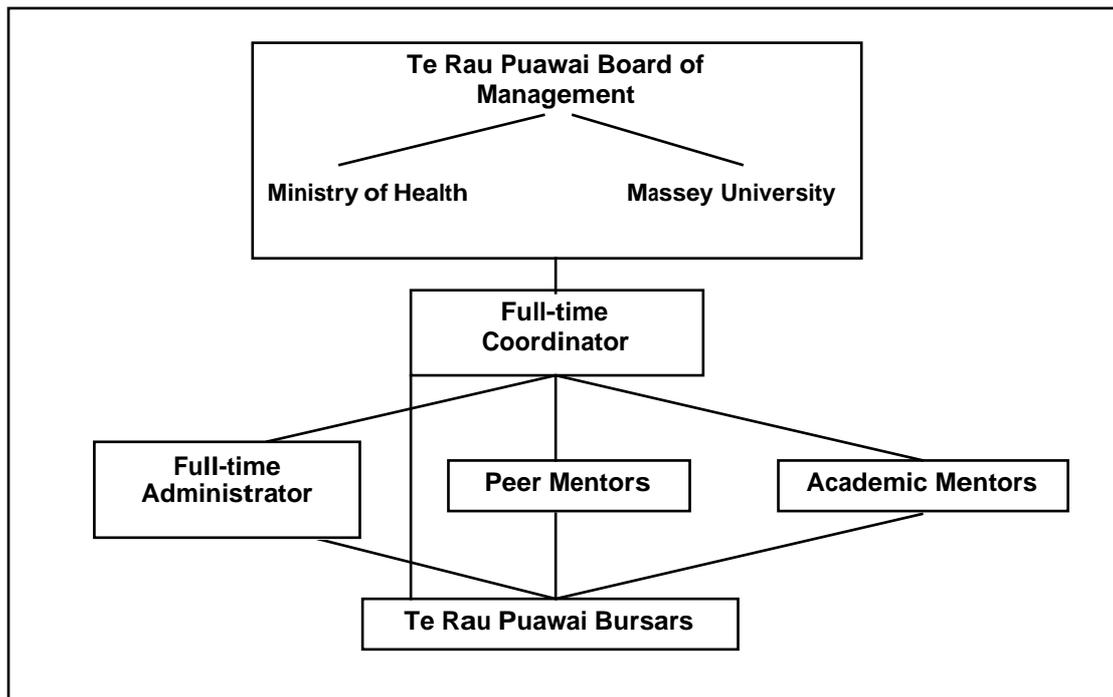


Figure 1. Organisational framework of Te Rau Puawai

Massey University offers flexible training options including: internal, extramural, block courses, and mixed mode (internal and external) from three campuses located in Palmerston North, Albany and Wellington. Te Rau Puawai however, has its base at the Palmerston North campus within Te-Putahi-A-Toi, the School of Maori Studies. At the time of this evaluation, the programme supported 123 students most of whom

are employed full-time within the broad area of Maori mental health, are mature students and study part-time as distance learners. Bursars (students) are located extensively throughout New Zealand from Kaitaia in the far north to Christchurch (Maxwell-Crawford, 2001).

Te Rau Puawai is lead by a full-time coordinator under the umbrella of the Te Rau Puawai Board of Management. The Board comprises of:

- the Pro Vice-Chancellor of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences and three other representatives from Massey University appointed by the Pro Vice-Chancellor
- three representatives from the Ministry of Health appointed by the Deputy Director General of Mental Health

The organisational framework of Te Rau Puawai is shown above.

Financial support from the Ministry of Health supports the following:

- bursar fees and course related costs
- bursar attendance to on-campus courses and headstart hui
- the full-time coordinator
- the full-time administrator
- cost of staffing the Thursday night call centre (peer mentors)
- regional visits by Te Rau Puawai staff to meet with and support bursars
- website
- database

Massey University provides the following:

- Te Rau Puawai office located within the School of Maori studies
- the provision of an academic mentor for each of the bursars
- Te Rau Puawai room with access to a computer and internet 24 hours per day
- a site for the Thursday night call centre
- a place to hold headstart hui twice per year in the School of Maori studies
- relevant mental health related educational programmes
- overhead cost for Te Rau Puawai coordinator, administrator and call team eg. power, phone costs and equipment

Academic mentoring

An integral part of the Te Rau Puawai programme is the provision of academic mentoring. The philosophy and motivation for setting in place an academic mentoring system for Te Rau Puawai bursars is clearly elaborated by Maxwell-Crawford (2000) in her evaluation of the Te Rau Puawai academic and peer mentoring components of the programme. We have relied upon her report to provide the following description of academic mentoring within the Te Rau Puawai programme.

Although programme organisers viewed financial support as important component of Te Rau Puawai, equally important was the nature of academic support to sustain bursars in pursuit of their academic qualifications. Academic learning support is

delivered in two ways. The first is through the Te Rau Puawai coordinator and support team who monitor bursar progress and assist them to develop quality assignments in a timely way. The second way that academic support is delivered is through academic mentors. Maxwell-Crawford (2000) described the selection of mentors in the following way.

Mentors are selected by the Head of School and each mentor is invited to participate with the right to decline. In the selection of potential mentors, an effort is made to select mentors who are involved with the student's programme of study as programme or paper co-ordinator. This is a deliberate move to minimise the additional workload to staff (p.2).

She further explained the role of the academic mentor.

The role of academic mentor operates in a passive capacity. It is the only section of the Te Rau Puawai model to do so, as the remainder are very much pro-active approaches. Each student is given their academic mentor's contact details and are responsible for initiating and maintaining contact when needed. It is not the responsibility of staff to contact or chase the students (p.2).

The major evaluation conclusions reached by Maxwell-Crawford (2000, p.6) were that

[Although students] may not contact their mentors regularly, they do appreciate having a mentor and when they make contact the large majority find the supports to be extremely helpful.

The time commitment involved in academic mentoring is likely to be no greater than 5 hours a month, with the large majority being somewhere between 0-5 hours a month.

Evaluation objectives

To evaluate the Te Rau Puawai programme, the Ministry of Health commissioned the Maori and Psychology Research Unit of the University of Waikato in July 2001. The overall aim of the evaluation was to provide the Ministry with a clearer understanding of the programme including: the perceived critical success factors, the barriers if any regarding Te Rau Puawai, the impact of the programme, the extent to which the programme may be transferable, gaps in the programme, and suggested improvements.

As an integral component of the Te Rau Puawai programme and as a specialised source of support, academic mentors were identified as an important group to receive comment from. This report documents the evaluative exchange that we had with some academic mentors of Te Rau Puawai bursars.

Method

Participants and procedure

We asked the Te Rau Puawai coordinator to support our work by furnishing an email list for all mentors of Te Rau Puawai bursars. We sent by email an information sheet about the evaluation and the questionnaire, inviting mentors to provide the evaluation team with their views about their role in Te Rau Puawai (see Appendix 1). Of 46 people to whom our email was sent, 5 automatically returned an 'out of office' or 'non-functional address' message. Of the remainder, 18 mentors in a number of programmes within the College of Humanities and Social Sciences responded to our questionnaire. Although the response rate was less than what we desired, the material furnished by these mentors was informative and revealing.

The questionnaire that we asked mentors to respond to contained five items. They were:

1. How many Te Rau Puawai bursars do you mentor?
2. On average how often would:
 - a) Te Rau Puawai mentoring bursars contact you?
 - b) The Te Rau Puawai Coordinator (Kirsty) contact you?
 - c) Even though it is not part of your role, how often would you contact your Te Rau Puawai Bursars?
 - At least once a week
 - At least once a fortnight
 - At least once a month
 - Less than once a month
 - Less than once a semester
 - Not at all
3. In what ways do you think your role as an academic mentor been useful to the bursars?
4. We are aware that some academic mentors are not widely used by bursars. What are your ideas about improving mentoring relationships?
5. Any other comments that you think are important for us to know as evaluators?

Data analysis

The responses made by mentors were subjected to content analysis to identify major themes. A summary report was sent to mentors, three of which took the opportunity to make further comment.

Ethical issues

This procedure was subjected to ethical review by the Research Committee of the Department of Psychology at the University of Waikato.

Findings

The major themes are presented below. They are: contact between Mentors and Bursars; the impact of the mentoring role; and suggestions that mentors made for improving the programme. In addition to themes arising from the questions that we asked, one further area is reported on. That is, the comments made about Te Rau Puawai coordination. The section ends with our conclusions.

Contact between Mentors and Bursars

About half of those mentors who made a response reported mentoring one or two bursars per year. The remainder reported mentoring more than 4 and sometimes more than 7 bursars. We suspect that in this latter group are mentors who are also programme leaders or coordinators of papers that have a large bursar enrolment in their papers.

Contact between mentors and bursars can occur in person, or for extramural bursars, by telephone or email or during block courses when these bursars are on campus. On average, Te Rau Puawai bursars were reported to have made contact with their mentors at least once or twice a semester. For some mentors, contact with bursars occurred more regularly.

Even though we knew that it was not the job of mentors to make contact with or to follow up on bursars most mentors had engaged in this activity at some time. For most, this occurred irregularly but a few had instituted structured approaches to ensuring that bursars remained in contact (regular email updates, social lunches, morning tea).

We also asked how frequently mentors were contacted and afforded support by the Te Rau Puawai coordinator. This is reported by mentors to occur regularly. Of their own volition mentors also commented that the nature of the support and information provided by the coordinator was helpful.

Impact of the mentoring role

We asked academic mentors how they thought their role had been useful to those bursars they mentored. Some were unsure, but most felt that they offered academic guidance and support, encouragement, opportunities for reflection and collegiality. These might be seen as contributing to increased confidence and feelings of esteem, and a more efficient ability on the part of the bursar to negotiate their academic work, systems and environments.

Unsure/Don't know

Four mentors indicated a reserved and unsure impression of the impact they had as an academic mentor upon those they mentored. These mentors had infrequent contact with their bursars (maybe once or twice a semester), and some mentors had never met their bursars in person due to the bursars' extramural status. The infrequent nature of these mentor/bursar relationships may well explain their 'unknown' and 'unsure' responses.

For 1 student I think I have been a useful source of encouragement and support. No idea for any of the others.

I do not feel that I have been of much concrete help.

I really don't know if I have been useful.

Academic support

Most mentors (n=12) identified a variety of ways that they supported their bursars academically. The obvious and frequently mentioned method of supporting bursars was direct support for understanding assignments and completing them within the deadline, this included providing academic information and resources. The ability to access a knowledgeable person with experience in the university environment, and in some cases, well informed in subject areas being studied, was seen to be a benefit that mentors afforded bursars. Resources included where access to information, people, literature and equipment that would facilitate assignment completion.

Providing a context for the academic activities of bursars was another identified impact. The following mentor points to bringing their prior experience as students and as staff to bear on supporting bursars through challenges.

Being able to let them know that the problems they may have with their study are problems that have been overcome by others including myself. I think I was able to be more proactive in that I knew in some cases what areas needed addressing.

Another highlighted the difference in support provided by mentors versus that by Te Rau Puawai staff, pointing to their specific knowledge gained as staff in a particular college.

It provides another reference point of support for these students - it contextualizes that support - i.e I am familiar with the specific ways that BSW runs as versus the Te Rau Puawai coordinators who might know the general ways of the College.

Some mentors mentioned 'advocacy' as an activity they engaged in for their bursars. Although this was not elaborated, we assume that advocacy activities included

obtaining extensions on work, explaining to lecturers special circumstances that bursars might have, and the like.

Being available was seen by one mentor as important, particularly “*when they most need help - eg. assignment due dates, questions on assignments, extensions*”. This comment points to the need for academic support to be timely and matched to the rhythms of bursar needs. As one mentor said, ... “*Just being there is helpful I think; a kind of help at last resort. Also, being able to help with administrative matters was useful*”.

Similarly, being able to provide “*support and advice that lies outside the framework within which the study is being undertaken*” was seen as important and as a way to avoid the power differential that is often apparent between lecturers and bursars enrolled in their courses. A number of mentors commented on this, suggesting that the use of graduate bursars rather than staff may reduce the power differential and attract bursars into a mentoring relationship in a less intimidating way.

Reflection and feedback

Providing the opportunity for bursars to reflect and receive feedback was seen by two mentors to result in beneficial outcome. One mentor told the evaluation team about how she provided “*...clear and detailed written feedback on all course work ... as well as an opportunity to discuss comments*”, reporting that “*bursars found this type of feedback really helpful*”.

Other comments were not so focussed on specific academic work but rather on the opportunity for mentors to act as a listener, to discuss ideas, act as a ‘sounding board’ and to give good advice and counsel when needed.

Encouragement and Esteem

Six mentors identified reassurance, encouragement and support from the mentor as important to increasing the level of confidence and esteem held by bursars.

I was able to give reassurance to the student, the student would feel free to ask 'trivial' - in his eyes- questions of me (over time learnt to do this directly to lecturers). Mainly, as overall confidence builder, once to work with him on an assignment draft. I think this was essential for keeping him in the programme because even though he was completing and having above average grades in the assignments, in the course he felt he was not good enough and I was able to assist him to be objective about the results he was achieving.

A contributor to this may well be the fact that “*...bursars know that there is someone there if they need help. Someone who is personally interested in their welfare and education*”.

Collegiality

Six mentors made comments that pointed to what we have labelled ‘collegiality’. We use this term to refer to relationships that impact the bursar so as that they feel welcome and a part of the life of the college and broader university. Having and knowing an identified academic staff member, particularly in the same or associated subject area from whom a bursar can seek support was seen by mentors as positively impacting the perceived collegiality of the academic environment in which the bursar is engaged.

I imagine it gives them a slightly increased sense of security, and perhaps makes them feel a little more accountable.

...Maori students need to feel that there is a whanau within their respective programmes and academic staff who are prepared to be their whanau.

Even though an atmosphere of collegiality may be desirable, the distance travelled by some bursars to arrive at a point where they feel comfortable may well be significant. One mentor described her experience with a bursar.

One of my students was very shy to begin with she approached our kaitautoko Maori first, who passed on her email to me and I contacted her by email first then by phone so that we were already comfortable with each other by the time of the contact course. I think once the contact is made between the student and staff member the relationship is positive (has been for me).

Suggested improvements

As we moved through this evaluation we became aware that some academic mentors were not widely used by bursars. We therefore sought to investigate this with mentors by asking for their ideas about improving mentoring relationships. The comments made by mentors were quite insightful and interesting both for the range of ideas as well as competing positions. For this reason we have included the full record of mentor responses to this question in Appendix 2. The major ideas suggested were: first, initiating mentor-bursar contact, and secondly, ideas on how to maintain regular mentor-bursar contact. Other ideas and issues were raised but only by one or two people.

Initiating mentor-bursar contact

Mentors appeared aware of the challenge that approaching and making contact with academic staff presented for bursars. They mentioned bursars feeling: whakama (shy) and perhaps intimidated by the higher status of staff. Rather than placing the whole burden upon the bursar to make contact with mentors, some participants felt that this responsibility should at least be shared or initiated by mentors in a more active way.

I feel that while the onus is on the bursar to initiate and maintain contact with the mentor, there is also a certain responsibility on the part of the mentor to be in touch with the bursars.

Perhaps there needs to be some way for lecturers to establish the initial contact. I'd be happy to write to my mentees and let them know who I am and what I am about, in order to hopefully break down some initial barriers

One of my students was very shy to begin with she approached our Kaitautoko Maori first, who passed on her email to me and I contacted her by email first then by phone so that we were already comfortable with each other by the time of the contact course. I think once the contact is made between the student and staff member the relationship is positive (has been for me). Students are shy especially if they are just new to the institution. Perhaps the staff member could make first contact?

Maintaining contact

Mentors told the evaluators about structuring the nature of contact so that they maintained contact with mentors in a regular fashion. Some mentors negotiated regular email contact, and where possible some had regular lunches or morning teas. Contracting with bursars in this way spread the responsibility of maintaining contact and sent clear expectations of what the mentor expected of bursars. This approach also had the advantage of identifying when bursars were likely to experience problems rather than waiting for the 'problem' to motivate contact.

Contracting with student for regular contact, not waiting for problems to arise but having it as a good time to reflect on how things going.

Challenges to mentoring

Suggestions from mentors about how to improve the mentor-bursar relationship spread beyond those tasks of initiating and maintaining contact. Mentors also told the evaluators about the need for mentors to want to 'go the extra mile', that is, to become more pro-active in their approach to mentoring. One mentor suggested training for mentors:

Possibly offering a training session for mentors on the kinds of issues that are likely to come up for TRP students and how to deal with them, making them feel like a team, as it offers them the opportunity to see what other parts of the learning support is given within the TRP Team.

Others referred to the need to reduce the power differential within the relationship and that graduate mentoring was perhaps a way to do this.

I don't know if you have senior students as mentors? I often think that one student will be more open and more willing to approach another student. The power asymmetry in the lecturer-student relationship is far greater than in the student-student relationship. I think this puts a lot of students off.

Two views emerged on the allocation as mentors of paper coordinators. The first was the advantages presented by occupying a dual position, that of lecturer and mentor. One mentor felt that by having bursars in their paper(s) enabled them to maintain more regular contact with them and to monitor their progress more closely.

I think putting the students with paper co-ordinators is a good idea it enables the staff member to mentor students in an indirect way, without the student formally approaching the staff member. While there was minimal contact as mentor/student there was a lot of contact as student/lecturer, which seemed to serve the purpose.

The contrasting position was that if a student performed poorly in a paper, then that had the potential to create a conflicting or compromising position.

I think that it is a bad idea for students to be assigned to staff who are also their lecturers. This can create a conflict of interest for the lecturer if the student does badly in the paper.

Both these views are equally valid and will require further examination by programme organisers.

Te Rau Puawai Coordination

Overwhelming in further comments made by mentors was their high praise and recognition of the importance of the support afforded to them by the coordinator, administrator and leadership of the Te Rau Puawai programme. One mentor felt assured that if problems arose with bursars they mentored, that appropriate support and follow up would be provided by the Te Rau Puawai coordinator. Another recognised the sense of community that the coordinator worked hard to create for both bursars and mentors. She appreciated meeting with other mentors and the broader bursar group.

Conclusions

With respect to contact between mentors and bursars our findings generally concur with those of Maxwell-Crawford (2001). Most mentors mentored one or two bursars per year but some had in excess of seven. On average, mentors were in contact with their allocated bursars once or twice a semester although for some this was more frequent.

Some were unsure about the impact of their mentoring role on bursars but views of this nature were held mainly by those who had infrequent contact with their bursars. The types of support that mentors felt that the mentor/bursar relationship afforded were: access to academic resources, a space and time for reflection and feedback, the opportunity to encourage and enhance the esteem of bursars, and a sense of collegiality, this being important to creating a sense of belonging and community.

Suggested improvements included mentors taking more proactive steps in establishing and structuring contact with bursars. Ideas to achieve this were, mentors initiating contact and explicitly contracting with bursars about frequency of contact and mentor and bursar expectations of the relationship.

Mentors identified some challenges to the role of mentoring. These challenges included the need to be aware of the power differential between mentors and bursars. For staff who were also paper coordinators this differential was a lot higher. However, a competing view in regard to these dual roles was the advantages that being both a mentor and paper coordinator afforded. Those who thought this way felt that contact and monitoring of students was more efficient.

References

Maxwell-Crawford, K. (2000). *An internal report on mentoring prepared for academic mentors of Te Rau Puawai Bursars*. Palmerston North: Massey University.

Appendix 1 Information sheet and questionnaire

Subject: Te Rau Puawai Evaluation

Date: Friday, 8 February 2002 3:14 PM

From: L.Nikora <psyc2046@waikato.ac.nz>

Tena koe,

I am contacting you in your capacity as academic mentor for Te Rau Puawai bursars. In July 2001, the Ministry of Health commissioned the Maori & Psychology Research Unit of the University of Waikato, to evaluate the Te Rau Puawai Work Force 100 programme of which Massey University is the provider. The overall aims of the evaluation are to investigate and comment on the following aspects of the Te Rau Puawai programme.

- critical success factors
- barriers to success
- uniquely Maori aspects of the programme
- gaps in the programme
- recommendations for improvements
- transferability
- other relevant issues

I am seeking your views as they relate to your role as academic mentor in the Te Rau Puawai programme. A brief questionnaire is provided at the end of this email for you to complete and return. I will be very grateful if you could set aside 10 minutes to contribute your comments.

Please note the following:

- Your identity will remain confidential to myself as the researcher collecting the information. Your identity will not be disclosed to any third party.
- Answer only those questions that you want to answer.
- You may withdraw from this process at any time and without explanation by simply refusing to respond to this email. A response from you will be read as agreement to participate. The information that you provide will therefore be used as data for analysis.
- Announcements and progress reports on the evaluation will be provided in Nga Moemoea, the Newsletter of the Te Rau Puawai programme.
- If you have any concerns about this project, please contact either myself or the Chair of the Psychology Department's Ethics Committee - Dr Bernard Guerin, University of Waikato, Private Bag 3105, Hamilton, Phone: 07 8562889 8293.

Manaakitanga,

Linda Waimarie Nikora
(Evaluation team leader)

Academic Mentors QUESTIONNAIRE

1. How many Te Rau Puawai bursars do you mentor?

2. On average how often would:

a) Te Rau Puawai mentoring students contact you?
(delete those that do not apply)

At least once a week
At least once a fortnight
At least once a month
Less than once a month
Less than once a semester
Not at all

b) The Te Rau Puawai Coordinator (Kirsty) contact you?
(delete those that do not apply)

At least once a week
At least once a fortnight
At least once a month
Less than once a month
Less than once a semester
Not at all

c) Even though it is not part of your role, how often would you contact your Te Rau Puawai Bursars?
(delete those that do not apply)

At least once a week
At least once a fortnight
At least once a month
Less than once a month
Less than once a semester
Not at all

3. In what ways do you think your role as an academic mentor been useful to the students?

4. We are aware that some academic mentors are not widely used by bursars. What are your ideas about improving mentoring relationships?

5. Any other comments that you think are important for us to know as evaluators?

Thank you for your time.

Appendix 2 Mentor ideas for improving the mentoring relationship.

This appendix included the verbatim comment made by mentors in response to being asked for their ideas on improving the mentoring relationship.

1 _____

The regular monthly email contact helps us keep in touch – lunch together every now and again is a bonus!

Perhaps academic mentors should be more willing to make themselves "available". I know this is the case for Maori staff.

2 _____

I'd guess that many mentors are probably seen as too intimidating for the students to contact. Many of the first year students in my extramural course are older, mostly women, and often who have left school with very little in the way of formal qualifications. Approaching someone with the title "Dr", "Lecturer" etc is simply too hard. These students come to vacation courses sometimes, and are very tense and nervous (about appearing dumb, saying something stupid etc).

Perhaps graduate students might be better as mentors given that the status and power differentials are less exaggerated.

Perhaps there needs to be some way for lecturers to establish the initial contact. I'd be happy to write to my students and let them know who I am and what I am about, in order to hopefully break down some initial barriers

3 _____

I think putting the students with paper coordinators is a good idea. It enables the staff member to mentor students in an indirect way, without the student formally approaching the staff member. While there was minimal contact as mentor/student there was a lot of contact as student/lecturer which seemed to serve the purpose.

Students are shy especially if they are just new to the institution perhaps the staff member could make first contact?

4 _____

Seemed to work well as is - I only wish my schedule and workload offered more time not only for this one student but for more - however, the Massey workload is formidable and one can't devote much time to student interaction on a one to one or small group level.

5 _____

Contracting with student for regular contact, not waiting for problems to arise but having it as a good time to reflect on how things going ,

- 6 _____
Some mentors aren't committed to the programme like others, I think that those who do like doing this work should be allowed to do it but should be appropriately workloaded for it, rather than extras on top of everything else.
- Commitment from the top, HOS and pushing the staff to do their job well.*
- Possibly offering a training session for mentors on the kinds of issues that are likely to come up for TRP students and how to deal with them, making them feel like a team, as it offers them the opportunity to see what other parts of the learning support is given within the TRP Team.*
- 7 _____
There are some tuakana teina issues present but overall it has to do with making an effort to front up for a face to face with the students.
- 8 _____
I think that it is a bad idea for students to be assigned to staff who are also their lecturers. This can create a conflict of interest for the lecturer if the student does badly in the paper.
- I would like to hear the students' views on how the scheme could be improved.*
- I would like to be sent my students' results each semester.*
- The morning tea held in July would have been better held a bit later, after the students had got their semester 1 results.*
- 9 _____
The students I am mentoring are extramural students and don't study in Palmerston North. I think only personal contact would improve the relationship.
- 10 _____
Some may not need mentors at different stages. Can make it a requirement to contact them once a month.
- 11 _____
I believe that the system already works well, and so I struggle to think of ways of improving it further.
- 12 _____
Some students are very whakamaa and a bit slow in coming forward so this year. I intend to contact mine (phone/email) monthly at least. I think it would help if it was made clear to students that since universities are places of learning, so we expect to be asked questions, (indeed, the more questions the better), that, since, no one has all the answers we most certainly will not have all the answers but we can ask someone who might. What we do have is our experience, little techniques for getting through and that we are willing to share with the students. Finally, one of greatest pleasures of the job is

encountering students who are wanting & willing to learn, to explore critically and to engage in the production of knowledge; its neat to chew the fat with such people.

13 _____

I'm not too sure. But as long as they know that they can approach us when they need to, then I think this is important and sufficient.

14 _____

I feel that while the onus is on the student to initiate and maintain contact with the mentor, there is also a certain responsibility on the part of the mentor to be in touch with the students.

15 _____

An excellent scheme but as will all things it is dependent on individual input to make it succeed. I think the tutor should take the initiative to make regular contact even if just a short-email saying "hows things and can I help".

16 _____

I don't know if you have senior students as mentors? I often think that one student will be more open and more willing to approach another student. The power asymmetry in the lecturer-student relationship is far greater than in the student-student relationship. I think this puts a lot of students off.

Appendix 3 List of technical reports

Technical report no. 1	Te Rau Puawai – Evaluation overview
Technical report no. 2	Addressing the recruitment and retention of Maori students in tertiary education institutions: A Literature Review
Technical report no. 3	Perspectives of Te Rau Puawai Bursars
Technical report no. 4	Te Rau Puawai Support team and staff perspectives
Technical report no. 5	Academic mentors perspectives
Technical report no. 6	Stakeholder perspectives