GUIDELINES FOR PRINCIPALS, MENTORS, STUDENTS AND SUPERVISORS

Arrangements with schools

Unisa depends a lot on schools, principals, teachers and pupils to make it possible for student teachers to complete their teaching practice. The Schools provide a good opportunity for experienced teachers to act as Mentors to Unisa student teachers. The Schools assist with allocating the student to a teacher who will serve as a Mentor Teacher.

Role of the principal

The principal
- has a decisive effect on the academic and professional character of the school and its influence on the student teacher
- will allocate the student to a teacher who will serve as a Mentor
- stimulates a culture of learning among the learners and a culture of teaching and education among teachers; and in this way influences the student teacher
- supervises the student teacher’s involvement in teaching, education and training and the teacher’s involvement in the student teacher’s activities
- ensures that the student teacher’s stay at the school is worthwhile
- serves as a link between the student teacher, the school and the university and ensures that the necessary forms are completed properly and forwarded to the university.
- contacts the teaching practice coordinator directly, if there are any uncertainties or any queries concerning the student’s teaching practice activities.

Role of the mentor

The teacher who serves as a mentor for the duration of the student teacher’s visit to the school
- allows the student teacher to participate in the life of the class and the school, and introduces the student teacher to the learners and staff
- shares ideas with the student teacher, answers questions he/she may have, directs his/ her observations and involvement and makes the student teacher’s stay at the school meaningful and informative
- ensures that the student teacher cultivates positive attitudes towards teaching and education at school
- tactfully discusses mistakes with the student teacher, where necessary
- serves as a role model for the student teacher
- provides the university and the principal with a sincere, honest, detailed and useful assessment of the student teacher that is in his/her best interest.
- contacts the teaching practice coordinator directly if there are any uncertainties or queries concerning the student’s teaching practice activities.
What the student teacher is expected to do

We expect the student teacher to experience all aspects of school life whether positive or negative. This visit should have a lasting effect on him/her. We trust that the student teacher will be moulded positively with a professional outlook on teaching. The student teacher is expected to:

- become involved in and learn from as many teaching and educational experiences at school as possible.
- take on more responsibilities for the class, with the teacher on hand as mentor, once he/she has observed a teacher.
- complete and submit the assignments that concentrate on the following matters:
  - the presentation of various lessons
  - the use of media
  - the written or recorded exposition of the lessons
  - dealing with learners with special education needs
  - monitoring and marking the learners’ written work
  - oral communication
- develop a critical and reflective attitude towards the school, teaching and education.
- see the connection between his/her teaching practice and theoretical studies in his/her degree or postgraduate certificate courses.
- try to make the life of the teacher who acts as a mentor a little easier for the duration of his/her stay at the school.
- be at the school during the full period prescribed for teaching practice.
- start the school day with all the teachers and leave when they leave at the end of the school day.
- follow the normal procedures of the school in case of illness.

Role of the Supervisor include the following:

- discussing the student’s teaching practice experience with the principal and/or mentor sitting in on a planned lesson given by the student in the presence of the student teacher.
- observe and assess the lesson presented by the student and complete the student assessment evaluation form.
- meet with the student after the lesson presentation and collect the student’s self-reflective feedback.
- return to the Unisa Teaching Practice Office no later than a week after a school visit.
- supporting students in developing the competences required for teaching and learning.