

# Dream, Design, Deliver: Empowering Early Career Teachers in ELICOS



## World Café Session

Fiona Wiebusch, Philippa Coleman,  
Sophie O'Keefe and Donna Cook



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Celebrating **40 years** of quality and innovation in ELICOS



# WORLD CAFE

## DREAM, DESIGN, DELIVER: EMPOWERING EARLY CAREER TEACHERS IN ELICOS

Fiona Wiebusch, Philippa Coleman, Sophie O'Keefe, and Donna Cook

#EAConf23



#ECT





# MEET YOUR WAITERS



**Fiona Wiebusch**  
The Queensland Institute  
*(Almond flat white)*



**Philippa Coleman**  
The Queensland Institute  
*(Long black)*



**Sophie O'Keefe**  
English Australia  
*(Flat white)*



**Donna Cook**  
Australian Catholic University  
*(English breakfast tea)*



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# THE DREAM

To understand the perceived needs and support required for early-career teachers to thrive in the ELICOS sector today.



## Early Career Teachers (ECTs)

have initial teaching qualifications; up to 5 years experience

## Our Goal



To garner insights from three groups in our sector: Early Career Teachers (ECTs), Experienced Teachers (ExpT), and Academic Managers (AMs)



## Insights

Gathered via online survey

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*The workplace culture of ELICOS providers is so critical for ECTs. The first school I worked for had a poor workplace culture. The academic manager was very overwhelmed and stressed and would often project his anger onto teachers, [...] Teachers were being shunned and punished for not being able to help students succeed in a program that only set them up for failure. Teachers became pessimistic, and no one was willing to help one another. The staff room became a revolving door of casual teachers.*





*The second school I worked for was completely different. Teachers were more than happy to share resources, incredibly communicative, and were willing to listen to one another's concerns. Academic managers were far more approachable at this school and understanding of our own circumstances and the challenges of our role. They were open to hearing about how we can further improve our programs.*





# APPRECIATIVE INQUIRY

a collaborative, strengths-based approach to change in organisations

**DISCOVERY**  
share findings  
from our study



**DELIVERY**  
suggest key actions  
for the sector



**DESIGN**  
share experiences  
from your centres





# DISCOVERY PHASE

Demographics of survey respondents (July, 2023)



Total*	ECTs	ExpTs	AMs
49	10	20	19

\*Australia - 47, USA - 1, UK - 1



Uni	Private	TAFE	Other*
29	10	4	6

\*Other = highschool prep, assessment, consultancy, IT, learning advisors



# SURVEY DESIGN

Online survey distributed on Facebook #AusELT #AMSIG LinkedIn and email

English Australia - CPD Framework

Stages of competency	1. Foundation	2. Developing	3. Accomplished	4. Lead
<b>Lesson and course planning</b>				
i.1 Identifying and selecting aims/goals	Identifies and sets learning goals in lessons with a basic awareness of varying abilities, needs and learner characteristics.	Plans purposeful and achievable learning goals across a sequence of lessons that are differentiated for individuals and groups to ensure appropriate learning experiences for all students.	Designs lesson sequences and courses that establish coherent links between intended learning goals, learning experiences and outcomes.	Implements procedures to monitor the effectiveness and achievement of learning goals in courses and programs across different contexts, responding to identified issues, problems and concerns.
i.2 Planning lessons and courses	Identifies different lesson components and plans lesson sequences according to given template using knowledge of student learning, content and teaching strategies.	Implements well-structured learning and teaching lesson sequences that engage students, promote learning and use relevant teaching strategies.	Modifies courses to create productive learning environments that engage all students and apply effective teaching strategies.	Leads colleagues in selecting, creating and evaluating resources, including digital technologies, for application by teachers in different courses and programs.
i.3 Selecting and using resources and materials	Demonstrates knowledge of curriculum materials and a range of resources, including digital technologies in designing learning experiences.	Selects a range of instructional resources and integrates digital technologies to engage students and enhance their learning.	Critically evaluates and selects curriculum materials, instructional resources and digital technologies to promote learning for a given context.	Leads regular reviews of courses and programs using multiple sources of evidence including: student assessment data, curriculum documents, teaching practices and feedback from students, peers and managers.

**Part 1**  
**Perceived confidence with 9 dimensions of teaching (EA CPD Framework)**



**Part 2**  
**Successful support strategies for ECTs in your ELICOS centre**



**Part 3**  
**Priorities at your centre to support ECTs in the future**



# MAKE A PREDICTION



Which column represents early career teacher **HIGH CONFIDENCE** areas?

## Column A

- Implementing tech-enhanced learning
- Conducting assessment, feedback and reporting
- Managing lessons and challenging behaviour
- Developing knowlege of intercultural communication



## Column B

- Developing ELT-specific capabilities
- Developing knowledge of language learning and teaching methodologies
- Managing lessons and challenging behaviour
- Engaging with professional development, reflection and/or research



# DISCOVERY PHASE

- Skim read the 'data menus'
- Introduce yourself to a colleague
- Share 1 thing that caught your eye

## EARLY CAREER TEACHERS

The **Early-career teachers (n=10)** surveyed highlighted the significance of workplace culture and manager support in their teaching journey, emphasising the importance of constant professional support. They requested guidance in classroom management, ELICOS-specific skills development, and obtaining ongoing professional support.

Key quotes from Early Career Teachers	Successful strategies	Priority areas	Key insights
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "The workplace culture of specific ELICOS providers is so critical..."</li> <li>• "My previous qualifications regarding English language helped me. The constant PD provided by the school and useful tips of the senior colleagues also helped me tread through challenging waters."</li> <li>• "[My Manager] provides copious amounts of class resources to me. I have a very healthy relationship with my colleagues and other teachers who are taking similar level classes [...] We bounce ideas and concerns off each other."</li> <li>• "[I feel supported when] assessments and weekly outlines are made for us." "Early career teachers are often left on their own, be it lesson planning or dealing with challenging students. They should be provided more support in these areas"</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resource support (3)</li> <li>• Workplace culture and managerial support (2)</li> <li>• Access to professional development opportunities (2)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing professional development (2)</li> <li>• Developing ELICOS-specific skills (2)</li> <li>• Classroom management (2)</li> <li>• Strengthening qualifications (1)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seeking assistance from students, but finding appropriate assessment</li> <li>• Requesting study options</li> <li>• Developing skills</li> <li>• Acknowledging grammar and pronunciation</li> <li>• Seeking international qualifications</li> </ul>

## EXPERIENCED TEACHERS

**Experienced teacher responses (n=20)** highlight the importance of creating an inclusive atmosphere that fosters growth and support. They emphasised the importance of establishing mentoring relationships and tailored induction/PD to help early career teachers navigate initial challenges.

Key quotes from Experienced Teachers	Successful strategies	Priority areas	Key insights
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "Open communication is important. [ECTs often] feel inferior when new to a school. Offering a place for their voice to be heard is essential for growth. A mentor is extremely helpful [...] Often ECTs are overwhelmed getting through tasks or classes, so 'learning' new things feels challenging. Pacing learning and observations is key. Simple 'share a success' meetings are great confidence builders."</li> <li>• "I work with TESOL graduates entering our field for the first time, post-Covid. I was disheartened to see their excitement slowly extinguishing as they find themselves in unfamiliar territory [...] They begin courses with minimal induction and are working long hours. [We need to] reassure them that it's 'okay not to know' and help them 'know where to go' to seek support."</li> <li>• "ECTs in my centre are left to their own devices and if students don't complain then management seems happy. In some ways this is good because the ECTs need to develop their skills. But I think more sharing of ideas and mentoring would be helpful."</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resource sharing (3)</li> <li>• Mentoring relationships (3)</li> <li>• PD opportunities (3)</li> <li>• Workplace culture and open communication (2)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consultation and support (3)</li> <li>• Structured induction (3)</li> <li>• Ongoing support (3)</li> <li>• Professional development (2)</li> <li>• Tailored support for levels of experience (2)</li> <li>• Challenges of casualisation (1)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creating a supportive culture for teachers</li> <li>• Implementing sustainable 'Ask me' sessions</li> <li>• Sharing experiences</li> <li>• Prioritising learning time</li> <li>• Having open communication programs committed to observed</li> </ul>

## ACADEMIC MANAGERS

**Academic Manager responses (n=19)** indicate a strong willingness to support ECTs through strategies such as mentoring, observations, structured PD, and a supportive school culture. Recognising contributions of early career teachers and fostering collegial relationships were also emergent themes.

Key quotes from Academic Managers	Successful strategies	Priority areas	Key insights
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "I'm all about my ECTs being SEEN and VALUED. Support throughout their first courses to ensure they understand procedures and lessons, to ensure their confidence and value for themselves within our school never drops."</li> <li>• "Create a supportive, open-door policy where ECTs feel comfortable to express their concerns with managers."</li> <li>• "Ensure that they understand the importance of PD and working within a team, they should not be flying solo. Regular check-ins and celebration of their accomplishments is paramount."</li> <li>• "Support for ECTs must include explicit 'permission to fail' to ensure PD opportunities are rich and rewarding."</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mentoring and peer support (11)</li> <li>• Observation and feedback (9)</li> <li>• Continuing PD (5)</li> <li>• Collaboration and communication (5)</li> <li>• Structured approaches (4)</li> <li>• Orientation and onboarding (1)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Building confidence through PD and mentoring (9)</li> <li>• Establishing career development and orientation (5)</li> <li>• Maintaining a supportive culture (4)</li> <li>• Developing ELT-specific skills (3)</li> <li>• Observing &amp; giving feedback (3)</li> <li>• Addressing workforce challenges (2)</li> <li>• Updating compliance (1)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creating a supportive culture for teachers</li> <li>• Promoting and celebrating success</li> <li>• Establishing a supportive culture</li> <li>• Fostering a supportive culture</li> <li>• Supporting generalist teachers</li> <li>• Supporting compliance</li> </ul>



# KEY INSIGHTS



- **Everyone Cares about Teachers**
- The highest % for ECTs = *not confident* in every category
- Perceptions of AMs/ExpT don't really align with ECTs
- ECT sample size is too small; keen to learn more
- What's coming through **strongly** is the need for:
  - Mentors and/or buddies
  - Supportive workplace culture and relationships
  - Opportunities for observation and being observed
  - Access to professional development opportunities



# DESIGN PHASE

What does your centre do to support ECTs?

Facilitate a discussion at your table about the strategies that are **working well** in your centre to support early career teachers. Consider having a:

- ▶ **SCRIBE**
- ▶ **TIMEKEEPER**
- ▶ **DISCUSSION LEADER/REPORTER**



Prepare to share with the room in \_\_\_ minutes!





# DELIVERY PHASE

What are the priorities for ECT support?

Let's look ahead to the future.

# 2 TOP PRIORITIES

- Quickly review your notes so far
- Chat to your colleagues
- Identify 2 priorities for the sector

 What will you do?

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# DREAM BIG

What should we share with the sector?

- Start a clean page on your **flipchart**
- Share **ONE** key message for our colleagues in the ELICOS sector,
  - *For example,*
  - **#MentorsMatter**
  - **E**veryone **C**ares about **T**eachers

**Get creative!**





# THANK YOU



To our survey respondents and World Cafe audience today.



[fiona@thequeenslandinstitute.com](mailto:fiona@thequeenslandinstitute.com)  
[philippa@thequeenslandinstitute.com](mailto:philippa@thequeenslandinstitute.com)  
[sophieokeefe@englishaustralia.com.au](mailto:sophieokeefe@englishaustralia.com.au)  
[donna.cook@acu.edu.au](mailto:donna.cook@acu.edu.au)



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Let's continue the conversation!

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