



TQF Domain 5

Demonstrate continuous professional learning to support your teaching role

Mentoring colleagues for Promotion (Accomplished)

Harry's Challenge

Harry has documented the mentoring process with his colleagues for his report. To prepare for his meetings, he did quite a bit of reading about the challenges for academic women in getting promoted which fed into the design of his mentoring support. He has received lovely messages of thanks from all 3 colleagues too. How might he consolidate his learning through this process and use it as evidence for his teaching leadership?

1. The Context

Harry, an Associate Professor of Politics and an awarded teacher, is supporting three colleagues apply for academic promotion to Level D from across the university-Education, Law and History. Recently, he joined the Professoriate Leadership Program which invites Level Ds and Es to be more active in their institutional leadership through participating in mentoring and writing a short report about it. All three academics have been matched with him because he is strong on L&T and is known to colleagues as a committed and innovative educator. Harry is also looking forward to learning as much as he can from the process too. Not only does he see it as a way of giving back, these are conversations that will keep him on his toes and ensures he is continuously learning as an educator and leader. He meets his mentees twice as a group, and twice with each individual colleague. Before the first group meeting, he asks each of his colleagues to have an informal conversation with at least two Level Ds in their School to get a feel for their advice on their L&T case. He also suggests they work their

contacts to locate two successful Level D promotion applications. At the first meeting, the conversation is fairly typical: worries that teaching doesn't really matter, about evidence and the level of detail they should aim for, and that the word count is too short. Harry does his best to assure them that many of their concerns are unfounded.

In the first of their individual meetings, Harry asks each mentee to submit a draft of their Teaching Case to him beforehand and to signal their concerns so that their next conversation is focused and productive. He makes comments on their drafts that relate to: moving away from listing of achievements towards a clear argument, adding more context to understand the scale of their claims and impact; asking about multiple types of evidence, and feedback to help make their case more persuasive. He reads the second drafts for all his mentees, invites them to review each other's drafts, and in the second group meeting, the focus is on interview preparation. When Harry learns of the outcome - 2 of the 3 are promoted - he sends a congratulatory text message to those colleagues and arranges a catchup with the third person to take the next step. He knows they will be devastated.

2. The Evidence

Harry uses Brookfield's lenses (1995) to structure the evidence for his report.

| Evidence Lens | 1. Educator/Self (intention, strategy and materials) | 2. Students (co-inquiry, engagement, feedback, outcomes, artefacts, improvement) | 3. Peers (co-design, feedback, observation, review, recognition, adoption) | 4. Scholarship (research-informed, engage in research, outputs, practice sharing) |
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| What Harry already has | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation in mentoring program • Mentor group sessions set up • Individual mentoring sessions • His own report reflecting on what he learned | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion outcome - 2 of the 3 are successful • Messages of thanks from mentees | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scholarly reading about the barriers academic women face in promotion |
| What Harry may need to consider | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback from the Promotions panel about the quality of L&T case • | |

3. Integrating Evidence into a Claim: an example

I am an Associate Professor in Politics with a long history at the university. I am also a recognised and awarded teaching innovator with 2 university awards, and 2 national awards over a 10 year period. I have actively been seeking opportunities to give back mainly because of the support I received early on from senior colleagues myself. I believe that academics should take on institutional leadership roles as part of their intellectual service, and that our professoriate needs to model its commitment to teaching and education. That has always been a passion for me -recognising that students are the lifeblood of our university system and we owe them a duty to support their success.

I have just completed the Professoriate Leadership Program (PLP) mentoring three colleagues applying for promotion to Level D. I see this work as both service and teaching leadership because mentoring is an educational task — that is, designing a learning process that has a direction and an outcome — getting promoted —and supporting colleagues as best I can to that outcome. I set up a process that involves meetings, learning about their context and practice, understanding their teaching philosophy, their claims for promotion and the evidence they have for it, reading drafts of their written cases and inviting them to provide feedback to each other, and just generally ‘thinking with them’ about their L&T practice. I am very intentional about my mentoring process which works best

take the opportunity seriously. 2 of my 3 colleagues were successfully promoted; the 1 who was unsuccessful is continuing to be mentored by me as we make sense of the feedback from the Promotions panel. All have sent me messages of thanks: *“I didn’t think I was going to get my application in because it was so damn stressful but thank you for the extra encouragement and support. This is the best mentoring experience I’ve had at the university (and I have had quite a few), and I hope to count you as a close colleague going forward.”*

My final PLP report documents what I have learned from the process - one I very much enjoyed - including reflections on the reading I did on the barriers academic women face in applying for promotion. In designing my mentoring process, I was very conscious of that research. I have suggested to the PLP team that there may be a case for a specific and targeted program for academic women, and I have provided my reading list as a resource for designing a program for that purpose.