Case studies:
A sharpening of the evaluative lens

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We wish to acknowledge the Jagera and the Turrbul peoples who are the Traditional Custodians of this land, and recognises their ongoing connection to land, waters and community.

We pay our respects to the First Australians, and their Elders past, present, and any First Nations people joining us today and acknowledge the important role First Nations people play as knowledge keepers and evaluators across the world.

Overview

1 Evaluation context

2 Case study methodology

3 What worked
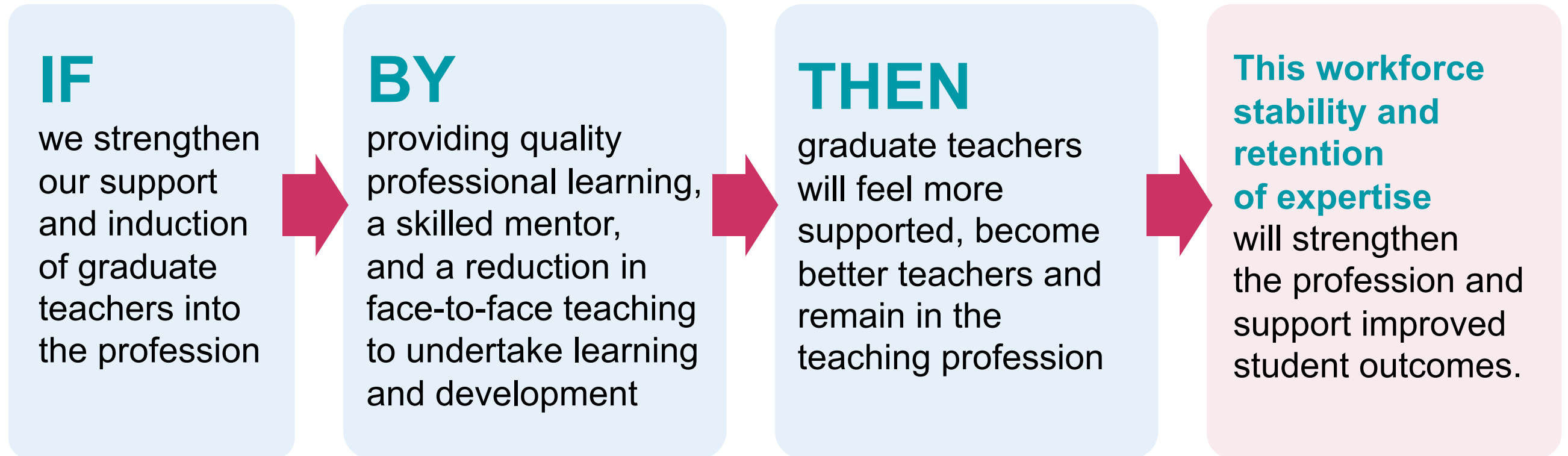
4 Lessons learned and challenges

Overview of Career Start Pilot (CSP)

Increasing our support of graduate teachers to accelerate their professional development, increase their job satisfaction and strengthen their resilience

Overview of Career Start Pilot (CSP)

Increasing our support of graduate teachers to accelerate their professional development, increase their job satisfaction and strengthen their resilience

IF we strengthen our support and induction of graduate teachers into the profession

BY providing quality professional learning, a skilled mentor, and a reduction in face-to-face teaching to undertake learning and development

THEN graduate teachers will feel more supported, become better teachers and remain in the teaching profession

This workforce stability and retention of expertise will strengthen the profession and support improved student outcomes.

Overview of Career Start Pilot (CSP) (cont'd)

Increasing our support of graduate teachers to Increasing our support of graduate teachers to accelerate their professional development, increase their job satisfaction and strengthen their resilience

Allocated mentor

Graduate teachers are allocated an experienced mentor to support their induction to the profession. Area-based leading teachers work with mentors to share practice, ideas and resources, building their expertise.

Additional time release

Graduate teachers receive a 20 percent reduction in face-to-face teaching duties to support their learning. Mentor teachers receive five percent time release to prioritise time with their graduate and further develop their mentoring capability.

Networking and wellbeing

Graduate and mentor teachers are connected through Area-based alliances that offer further opportunities to network with peers, build on professional learning offerings and support graduate health and wellbeing.

Professional learning

Graduates and mentors have opportunities to become an active member of professional communities, build their professional practice and resilience as professional educators, forming a strong professional identity.

Graduate Teacher Capability Framework

The new Graduate Teacher Capability Framework provides a road-map for induction and mentoring.
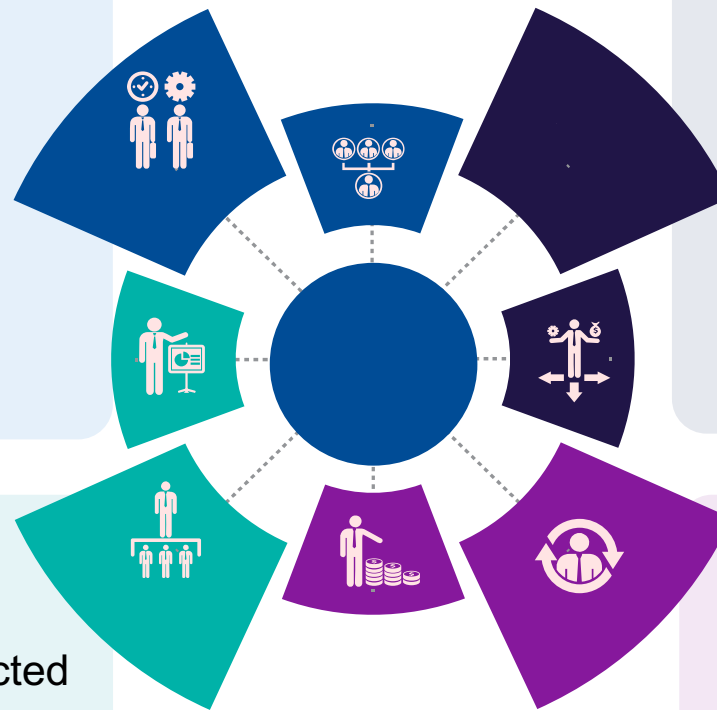
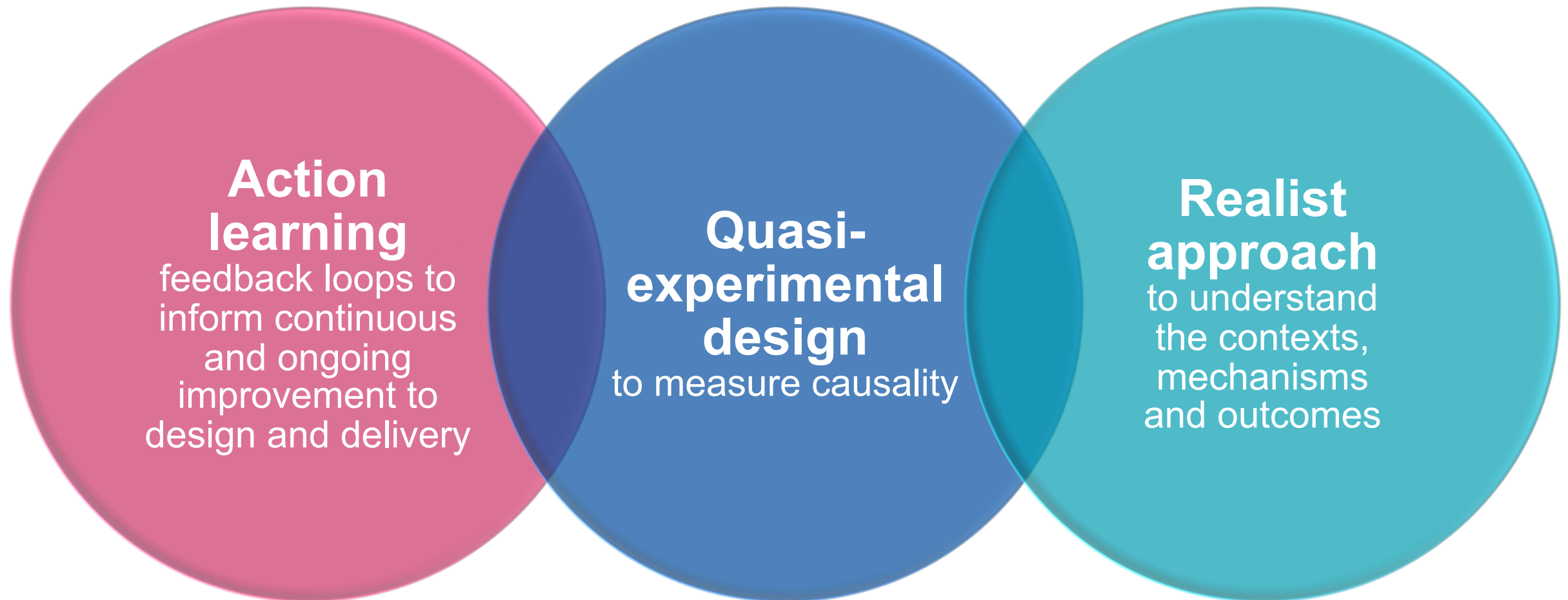# Overview of Career Start Pilot (CSP) areas
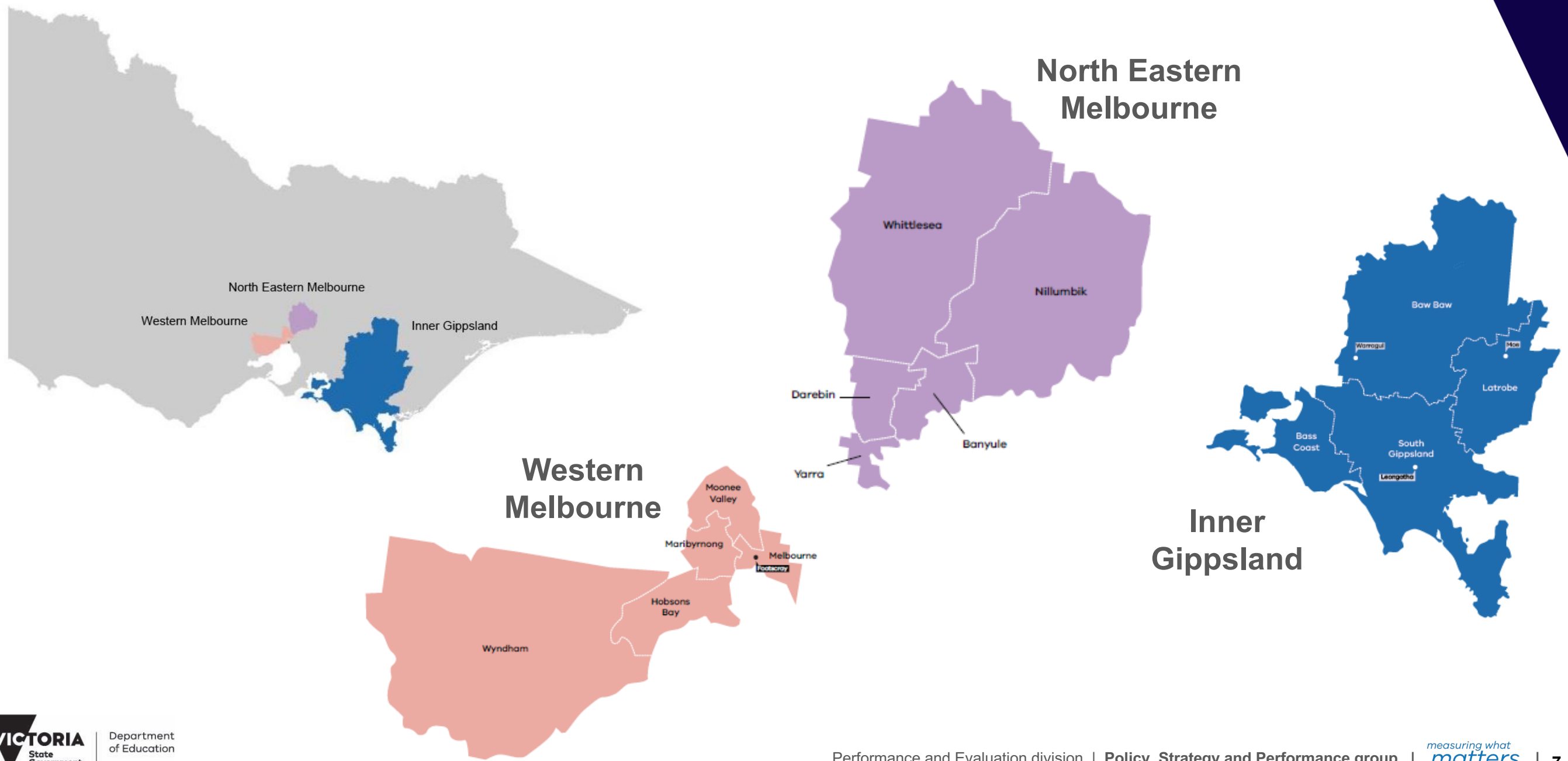
Evaluation overview

Three year evaluation (2021-2023) to:

▶ Understand program effectiveness in strengthening the professional identity and resilience of graduate teachers

▶ Identify opportunities for improvement and to inform a potential system-wide roll out

▶ Contribute learnings to other related workforce initiatives.

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Evaluation approach

Action learning
feedback loops to inform continuous and ongoing improvement to design and delivery

Quasi-experimental design
to measure causality

Realist approach
to understand the contexts, mechanisms and outcomes

Key data sources and analytical methods

Sources/methods	Addressing questions of…
Literature scan	Evidence for need
Case studies (inc. CMO analysis)	What worked for whom, where, why; effectiveness; enablers/barriers
Informant interviews/ quarterly stakeholder reflections	Evidence for need; effectiveness; efficiency
Participant surveys (baseline/mid/end)	Effectiveness; enablers/barriers
Quasi-experimental analysis of key outcomes	Effectiveness
Program finance data	Efficiency

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Quasi-experimental analysis of key outcomes	Effectiveness
Program finance data	Efficiency

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Use of case studies in evaluation

> The purpose of a case study is to study intensely one set (or unit) of something—programs, cities, counties, worksites—as a distinct whole.
>
> **- Edith D. Balbach (1999)**

- Depth and complexity of programs

- Multiple cases to achieve breadth and comparison

- Detailed description of what happened, the context in which it occurred and the changes that occurred

Case study methodology

LENS

Realist (how context influenced outcomes in different school contexts)

SAMPLING

Purposive, by:

- Location

- School size

- School-level disadvantage (Student Family Occupation and Education/SFOE)

COLLECTION

- Both face-to-face and online

ANALYSIS

- Context-Mechanism-Outcome (CMO) construction

- Thematic coding in ATLAS.ti and NVivo

- Triangulation with program/system data

Case study example: Small bilingual primary school*

School profile

Small bilingual primary school, Melbourne

- Two of the graduate teachers were a teachers' aide and a casual relief teacher (CRT) at the school prior to commencing the graduate position.
- The bilingual program involves teaching the Victorian curriculum in a second language for eight hours a week, over three days a week.

Established: **1920**

Local population: **11,200**
(2021 Census data)

Students	**146**
Teaching staff	**16.7**
Non-teaching staff	**3.8**
Graduate teachers	**4**
Mentors	**4**
Funds received (school allocation funds, 2022 calendar year, as at July 2022)	**$92,549**
Cost per graduate (time-release only)	**$17,345**

AVERAGE TIME RELEASE

How time is spent

- Lesson planning
- Sharing resources
- Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) project preparation
- Class observation
- Time with mentor
- CANVAS resources
- Wellbeing and work-life balance

Grads **1-3 hrs** per week

Mentors **1 hr** per week per graduate teacher

COMPONENT

Implemented (Y/N)	
Graduate teacher time release	Y
Mentoring	Y
Graduate teacher classroom observation	Y
Graduate teacher professional learning	Y
Mentor time release	Y
Mentor professional learning	Y
Employment of additional classroom teachers for time release cover	Y
Alliances participation	Y

What's working

- Protected mentoring time was valued by mentors and graduate teachers.
- Mentoring meetings, when possible, were scheduled at times when the mentors and graduate teachers were not teaching.

> *This program is us showing how we value [graduate] teachers and want them to be longstanding in their profession.*
> – School leader

- Inter-school networking of professional learning and alliance activities were valued by school leaders, graduate teachers and mentors.
- Professional learning was able to be implemented by graduate teachers and mentors.
- Wellbeing resources were used to structure mentoring activities.

What isn't working

- Mentors were sometimes timetabled to co-teach a class with their graduate teacher, reducing common out-of-class time for mentoring meetings and impacting mentoring time.
- Staffing shortages and difficulty sourcing casual relief teachers resulted in graduate teachers and mentors being called on to cover classes, impacting mentoring time.
- Some graduate teacher-mentor pairings were rearranged during the second year of the school's participation in CSP due to staffing changes.

Impacts & Benefits

Graduate and mentor teachers
- School leaders and mentors reported an increase in graduate teacher wellbeing, and the confidence and capability to take on additional responsibilities.[2,3]

School community
- Dedicated timetabled time-release for graduate teachers served as a reminder for all school staff that these were new graduates and may need informal and formal support.

* Some details have been fictionalised to avoid potential identification

Case study: Large P-9 college*

School profile

Large P-9 college, Melbourne

Induction and mentoring program of a smaller scale and less structured in nature than CSP was in place prior to commencing CSP.

Established: 2013

Local population: 56,445
(2021 Census data)

Students	2,301
Teaching staff	155.4
Non-teaching staff	44.5
Graduate teachers	16
Mentors	9
Funds received (school allocation funds, 2022 calendar year, as at July 2022)	$374,926
Cost per graduate (time-release only)	$21,998

AVERAGE TIME RELEASE

How time is spent

- Lesson planning
- Sharing resources
- Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) project preparation
- Class observation
- Time with mentor
- CANVAS resources
- Coaching and improvement

Grads 3 hrs per week

Mentors 1 hr per week

COMPONENT
Implemented (Y/N)

Graduate teacher time release	Y
Mentoring	Y
Graduate teacher classroom observation	Y
Graduate teacher professional learning	Y
Mentor time release	Y
Mentor professional learning	Y
Employment of additional classroom teachers for time release cover	Y
Alliances participation	Y

Impacts & Benefits

Graduate and mentor teachers

- Increased networking opportunities for graduate teachers and mentors within school.
- Networking opportunities, time release and mentoring reported to improve graduate teachers' confidence and wellbeing.

> *[Time release] made so much difference and it kind of lessened my stress levels, because being a teacher, it's stressful. It's tiring. It's fatiguing. It's not easy. But those allocated times made it more manageable.*
> — Graduate teacher

School community

- CSP participation raised school-wide awareness of the need of a coordinated approach to support graduate teachers.

> *[As a result of CSP] we basically have a greater expectation around the way we're managing graduates, but it's also impacted on building skills of everyone who's involved in the program from the graduates through to the mentors through to the assistant principals.*
> — School leader

What's working

- School designed and implemented a school-specific termly CSP guide for graduate teachers and mentors.[1]
- CSP-wide coordinated approach to mentoring activities.
- CSP complemented existing induction and mentoring program.

What isn't working

- Difficulty sourcing casual relief teachers (CRTs) to cover time release for mentoring, professional learning workshops and alliance meetings, which affected graduate teacher and mentors' attendance at workshops and meetings.
- Graduate teachers and mentors were called on to teach extra classes when CRTs are not available, resulting in lost time release and protected time with mentor.
- Timetabling restrictions affected professional learning workshops and alliance meeting attendance, with only a single mentor being able to attend professional learning workshops at a time.

* Some details have been fictionalised to avoid potential identification

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Evaluation Practice branch | Performance and Evaluation division | **Policy, Strategy and Performance group** | *measuring what* *matters* | 15

How we used them

Intended for reporting and decision making

Useful for planning workshops with implementing teams and leading teachers

Provided to central funder for end-of-program evaluation report

Used as a data source for realist evaluation logic testing

Value

- Great tool for engagement with implementing teams – made our findings relevant

- Gave the evaluators clear understanding of program implementation and school experience – including contexts that *weren't* working, and why

- Contextualised and balanced the story told through our quasi-experimental analyses

"

'[Without CSP] I wouldn't have made it through…I would have quit, to be honest.'

- Graduate teacher

"

Success factors

- Close working relationships with implementing teams and area-based teams

- Ongoing program stakeholder capacity building during pilot (3 years) – enabled staff to readily engage and use evidence to change practice during planning workshops

Challenges and lessons learned

- Creating a horse by committee…

- Resourcing impost, COVID-19 – adapting to the conditions

- Case study visualisation

- Aligning approach with (sometimes rigid) reporting needs

- Saturation in context of multi-year, relatively stable pilot

Useful resources

Balbach, E. D. 9 California Department of Health Services, (1999).
Using case studies to do program evaluation.
Retrieved from website: http://www.case.edu/affil/healthpromotion/ProgramEvaluation.pdf

Preskill, H., & Boyle, S. (2008). A Multidisciplinary Model of Evaluation Capacity Building.
American Journal of Evaluation, 29(4), 443–
459. journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/1098214008324182

Questions?

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