

For 21 years of an institutionwide program of student peer support that has adapted to the challenges of, and engagement with, increasingly diverse learners.

OVERVIEW SUMMARY OF



“The mentor program helped me not only through academic challenges but also in developing life skills and creating lifelong friendships (Artsmentor, 2005).

EVIDENCE

Influenced student learning, engagement and the student experience. The Student Mentor Program’s role in welcoming new students has been continually evaluated as being one of the most valued Orientation activities that students undertake. Since 2003, campus students have been asked to rank the benefits of up to 15 activities in Orientation Week, with sample sizes exceeding 100 students. That percentage approval rate (strongly agree or agree that the mentor introduction and was a useful and informative activity) has consistently been 90% or greater. Over a number of years, entree survey responses indicate that the type of support students receive from their mentors is evenly distributed amongst six categories of helping: meeting other students, understanding about university learning, emotional support, subject content, referring, and just having someone to talk to.

“The Mentor Program for me was a life saver. There were a number of times we tried to meet for coffee, but I have a very busy schedule with fulltime work (40 hours per week) and fulltime Uni (3 subjects). It was hard to meet so we communicated via email & facebook almost daily at some stage. (First Year Student, 2008).

“My mentor, [name], is such a lovely, warm, caring, intelligent and hardworking individual, she serves as a great role model to us all. She intuitively seems to send an email or catch up for coffee, just at a critical and much needed time. I really appreciate her taking the time out of her busy schedule to provide this added support, which helps me to accomplish my goals. These people who volunteer to be mentors, and do the job as well as [mentor name], should be highly commended for their efforts. (First Year Student, 2010).

“I have been a student, a mentor, mentor leader, tutor and I am now a Learning Adviser while completing a Graduate Certificate of Education. My career has been significantly influenced by JCU’s Mentor Program. I use the skills I learnt as a mentor every day. (Learning Adviser, 2013)

Recognition from fellow staff, the institution and the broader community. The Student Mentor Program has been widely and regularly recognised from diverse sources for its contribution to the respect and support for the development of students as individuals. In 2013 the Program received JCU Citation for Outstanding Contribution to Student Learning and additionally, was honoured with the Overall 2013 JCU Citation for Outstanding Contribution to Student Learning.

When addressing the student mentors at the 2004 Mentor Presentation Night, JCU Chancellor, John Grey (Ret’d) illustrated the broad community recognition the Program enjoys

“This is one of the best programs I’ve seen in the world. It’s a great idea, and it’s been done well. (Chancellor, 2004)

