

Guidelines for Circuit Supervisors

The Transforming Teacher Education and Learning Programme in Ghana (T-TEL, 2014-2018) aims at transforming the delivery of pre-service teacher education in Ghana by improving the quality of teaching and learning in all Colleges of Education.

Teaching Practice is of vital importance to improve the quality of teachers who graduate from the Colleges of Education to teach in Kindergarten, Primary and Junior High Schools in Ghana. Therefore, as part of the improvement of pre-service delivery, T-TEL has a Schools Partnership (SP) component which aims at providing systematic and uniform practice of Teaching Practice and in the Mentoring of Student Teachers. Through the SP component of T-TEL better links will be made between Colleges of Education, Partner Schools and supporting District Education Directorates.

The SP component is implemented by a National Team of School Partnerships Advisers (SPAs) with an international key SPA to support the team. As one of their responsibilities, the School Partnership Advisers (SPAs) have developed Teaching Practice Guidelines for different key stakeholders. These Guidelines for Circuit Supervisors will help support you in your role of supporting student teachers during their Teaching Practice at schools. These Guidelines align with the T-TEL Student Teacher Handbook, Tutor Handbook and Mentor Handbook which you will become familiar with.

The role of the Circuit Supervisor requires you to work closely with other colleagues to share responsibilities and where necessary to support the Lead Mentors, Mentors and Student Teachers to improve Teaching Practice. As a professional educator you will also have certain key attributes which will help you in your roles and responsibilities as a Circuit Supervisor, for example, a Circuit Supervisor will be:

Empathetic		Respectful of those you support		A team player	
A good listener		Able to understand the needs of student teachers in particular		Affable	
Knowledgeable and understanding of adult learning		A good communicator and a role model		Very tolerant	
A facilitator and mediator of learning		Able to make fair judgments		Approachable	

Purpose

The purpose of the Circuit Supervisors' Guidelines is to clarify roles and responsibilities in supporting Student Teachers **before, during and after** their Teaching Practice and improving Teaching Practice at Partner Schools.

Actions to be taken by the Circuit Supervisors

- **Attend an orientation meeting with SPAs on T-TEL new approaches to TP.**

The T-TEL programme is a transformational one. There is a need therefore for all key stakeholders to go through orientation in order to be acquainted with the set goals that are to be achieved. As a Circuit Supervisor your orientation will include your responsibilities towards implementation of the programme.

- **Before School Visits: Prepare an itinerary for monitoring and supporting TP schools & seek DDE approval.**

Ideally every official visit you make to Teaching Practice Schools must be discussed with the DDE/ MDE. Therefore it will be necessary to prepare an itinerary, which you will discuss for approval before you implement your school visits. After you have discussed and had inputs from Directors, they will be able to support you in the implementation. Support may come by way of providing transport for monitoring. In a situation where the Circuit Supervisor owns a motor bike for monitoring, it will be the responsibility of the Director to approve the supply of fuel for the work to be done.

- **Visit each school at least twice during the TP.**

The Circuit Supervisors' routine is visiting schools in a circuit and supporting Teaching/Learning. The T-TEL approach is transformative and will link you better with the College of Education Tutors whom the Circuit Supervisors will support through monitoring and supporting Student Teachers during their TP at school-base.

- **During School Visits**

One of the key functions of a Circuit Supervisor is to improve classroom teaching through ensuring child-centred approaches in teaching. In this new approach it is necessary to make sure the Circuit Supervisor has been invited to the school to give support. When the Circuit Supervisor gets to the school they will show a deep interest in what the Student Teacher is doing and how the school is supporting the Student Teacher. It is recommended that a Circuit Supervisor visits at least two Student Teachers and their mentors; assesses their practice for further discussions at official management meetings with your Director and colleagues and for feedback to the Colleges of Education. Some of the teaching/ learning strategies for a Student Teacher and Mentor to work on and for a Circuit Supervisor to look out for are:

- ✓ Setting the scene well at the start of a lesson
- ✓ Using gender responsive pedagogy (E.g. Equal participation and distribution of questions in the classroom, encouragement of girls, leadership roles for girls, mixing of girls and boys in seating arrangements).
- ✓ Using meaningful games
- ✓ Using songs in a meaningful way
- ✓ Using ice breakers to change the pace of a lesson

- **After observing a Student Teacher practice their lesson**

After the Teaching Practice observation encourage both student teachers and their mentors to reflect on SOME of the following areas:

- ✓ The use of strategies to assess pupil/student understanding.
- ✓ The use of varied TLMs by Student Teachers/ teachers to facilitate learning.
- ✓ The use of different interactive methods/activities to facilitate learning
- ✓ The use of appropriate questioning and communication skills.
- ✓ The use of effective strategies to manage a class, especially, a large class.
- ✓ The use of constructive feedback to consolidate students' learning, etc.

And some reflective assessment questions for a Circuit Supervisor might be:

- ✓ How did you give advice? Give examples
- ✓ What type of advice did you offer the Student Teacher/ Mentor? Give examples.
- ✓ How did you make your advice constructive?

- **Arrange for the replacement of relevant resource materials such as syllabuses, textbooks or TLMs if possible, where there might be shortages**

Sometimes relevant resource materials go scarce in certain schools. As a Circuit Supervisor, one of the responsibilities will be to ensure that pupils are given the right content for learning. The district stores, invariably, keep some books as buffer stock. The Circuit Supervisor can recommend, through the District Director, to get replacements to pupils wherever they are available.

- **Ensure cooperation among the Lead Mentor, Mentor and Student Teachers**

If a Student Teachers' Teaching Practice experience is to be a positive one, it is necessary for those who support them to work in a collaborative and cooperative manner. As a Circuit Supervisor one the key responsibilities will be to ensure that this collaboration and cooperation occurs and has a positive impact on the Teaching Practice experience.

- **Ensure punctuality and regularity of Mentors in TP schools**

Absenteeism and lateness have been reported as one of the key issues for the ineffectiveness of the Teaching Practice experience. As Circuit Supervisor another responsibility will be to ensure that those who support Student Teachers understand their roles and responsibilities and are there in the schools to support them; they are regularly in school and ready to support. The Lead Mentor in turn should ensure Mentors fulfil their roles effectively and efficiently.

Annex 1: Guidelines for Protection Strategies for Student Teachers on Teaching Practice

The Gender Responsive competencies that are described in the table below provide a comprehensive set of guidelines or indicators for protection of Student Teachers, particularly female Student Teachers, during their teaching practice. The Gender Responsive competencies highlight the systems and procedures that should be in place in all TP schools to safeguard Student Teachers. These Gender Responsive competencies are included as a core component of the T-TEL Project Monitoring and Evaluation Scorecard.

Gender Responsive competencies for Mentors	Example actions or strategies
<p>1. The Mentor makes sure that their school sexual harassment policy has been developed and implemented</p>	<p>a) The school has received and adopted the National Teaching Council’s Sexual Harassment Policy. If the policy has not yet been circulated, the Lead Mentor should help the school complete the following actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. The school’s staff develops an agreed definition of what constitutes sexual harassment (e.g. sexual bullying, suggestion, touching and favours. Coming from staff/community towards other teachers, Student Teachers and pupils) ii. The school staff agree on a transparent reporting system for teachers, Student Teachers or pupils experiencing sexual harassment (e.g. victim can go to a designated female staff member, problem then taken to HT/SMC, then circuit supervisor, etc.) iii. The school staff nominates an appropriate, trained staff member to act as the first point for reporting and to act as a counsellor for those experiencing sexual harassment iv. The school staff develops a reprimand system for those guilty of sexual harassment (e.g. develop appropriate punishments for staff, HT, community members, pupils, etc.) v. The HT disseminates the sexual harassment definition, reporting system and reprimand system to all teachers, Student Teachers, pupils and community members <p>b) The Mentor ensures that all Student Teachers are aware of the school’s sexual harassment policy and reporting system</p> <p>c) The Mentor monitors female Student Teachers’ relationships with staff/community members to make sure they are free from sexual harassment</p>
<p>2. The Mentor helps to secure gender responsive accommodation for female Student Teachers</p>	<p>a) The Mentor meets with their Student Teacher before teaching practice begins to help them find safe accommodation</p> <p>b) The Mentor ensures that their Student Teacher does not have to live with a teacher, Mentor or member of staff</p> <p>c) The Mentor ensures that if their Student Teacher lives in a community member’s house, the community member has been vetted and is aware of the school sexual harassment policy</p> <p>d) The Mentor ensures that their Student Teacher’s accommodation is close to the school and is safe at night (adequate lighting, security guards/watchmen), particularly for females</p> <p>e) If possible, the Mentor tries to ensure that pairs of female Student Teachers find accommodation together</p>
<p>3. The Mentor ensures gender responsive treatment of Student Teachers at the school</p>	<p>a) The Mentor and staff’s daily behaviour does not reinforce traditional gender roles (e.g. only female Student Teachers run errands or clean up)</p> <p>b) The Mentor ensures that female and male Student Teachers are treated equally by staff, community and pupils</p> <p>c) The Mentor monitors female Student Teachers’ relationships with staff/community to make sure they are free from bullying, intimidation and any form of abuse</p> <p>d) The Mentor ensures that female and male Student Teachers have equal access to school resources and teaching/learning materials</p> <p>e) The Mentor encourages and supports female Student Teachers in teaching subjects like maths and science</p> <p>f) The Mentor encourages female Student Teachers to take leadership roles during teaching practice</p> <p>g) The Mentor supports and makes allowances for female Student Teachers who have to balance family responsibilities (such as marriage, pregnancy, child-care)</p>

Table continues overleaf

4. The Mentor provides gender responsive support to Student Teacher well-being	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The Mentor builds confidence in Student Teachers, especially females b) The Mentor monitors female Student Teachers' day-to-day well-being c) The Mentor takes action to address female Student Teachers' problems/needs d) The Mentor makes sure that female Student Teachers feel comfortable and secure e) The Mentor ensures that female teacher toilets have water and hygiene bins and that female Student Teachers are allowed to use these
5. The Mentor demonstrates gender responsive classroom practices while co-teaching with Student Teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The Mentor shows Student Teachers how to give equal chances to girls and boys to ask/answer questions b) The Mentor shows Student Teachers how to assign leadership roles equally to girls and boys in lesson activities c) The Mentor shows Student Teachers how to make sure girls and boys participate equally in activities d) The Mentor shows Student Teachers how to be patient with girls and boys who may be shy or afraid to speak out e) The Mentor shows Student Teachers how to check if both girls and boys equally understand the lesson f) The Mentor shows Student Teachers how to provide constructive verbal feedback to both girls and boys in class
6. The Mentor demonstrates classroom strategies to challenge traditional gender roles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The Mentor shows Student Teachers how to use teaching materials that do not show or reinforce traditional gender roles (e.g. women cooking/cleaning and men in professional roles) b) The Mentor shows Student Teachers how to point out traditional gender roles that appear in books and discuss how traditional gender roles can limit what girls think they can achieve in their lives c) The Mentor shows Student Teachers how to use examples (in exercises/activities) that challenge or reverse traditional gender roles (e.g. like showing men/boys cleaning the house) d) The Mentor shows Student Teachers how to make girls and boys feel confident to challenge traditional gender roles in general (e.g. encourage boys to cook and girls to be doctors) e) The Mentor shows Student Teachers how to support/encourage girls in studying and achieving in subjects like maths and science
7. The Lead Mentor contributes to improving the school's gender responsive Mentoring practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The Lead Mentor checks that there is an equal number of female and male Mentors at the school (if there is an imbalance, the Mentor advocates for the gender balance of Mentors) b) The Lead Mentor completes the Gender Responsive Scorecard after every teaching practice and reflects on how they can improve next time c) The Lead Mentor has all Student Teachers anonymously appraise their Mentors using the Gender Responsive Scorecard at the end of their teaching practice d) The Lead Mentor collects and looks at all the Student Teachers' appraisals of their Mentors and identifies areas that need improvement e) The Lead Mentor facilitates discussion with other Mentors to choose/prioritise follow-up actions for areas that need improvement f) The Lead Mentor advocates/budgets for gender responsive training for all staff and Mentors g) The Lead Mentor advocates/budgets for gender responsive infrastructure improvements