

School experience

Introduction to school experience year 2

Mentor handbook



Forum for African Women
Educationalists in Malawi
(FAWEMA)

*"Supporting Girls and Women to
Acquire Education for
Development"*



The Open
University



Keeping Girls in School scholarship programme
Funded by UKaid from the UK government

With thanks to the following people who have assisted in authoring and editing these materials:

Olivier Biard, Mary Chalamanda, Joyce Chitsulo, Jane Cullen, Caroline Davies, Samantha Dorrington, Lore Gallastegi, Chrissie Jere, Dr. Ezekiel Kachisa, Mary Kamba, Donna Namaona, Effiness Njunga, Archangel Yambeni, Sally Pritchard, Kimberly Safford and John Stubbs.

Contact details:

International Development Office
The Open University
Walton Hall
Milton Keynes
MK7 6AA
United Kingdom
+44(0) 1908 655 313

For more information about The Open University Keeping Girls in Schools Project see:

www.open.ac.uk/about/international-development

For more information about the TESSA programme see:
www.tessafrica.net

This material has been funded by UK aid from the UK Government, however the views expressed do not necessarily reflect the UK Government's official policies

© April 2015
This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 License.



‘Keeping Girls in School’ Scholarship Programme

Mentor’s Folder Year 2

Contents

Your role as a Mentor in the KGIS programme	5
School Experience Framework Year 2	14
Mentor Handbook – Introduction	15
Who’s who guide	21
Using the study units	23
Teaching Assistant’s Year 2 Introduction	25
Study Calendar – Term 1	29
Study Calendar – Term 2	30
Study Calendar – Term 3	31
Theme 4: Working with others and learning from them	33
Theme 4 Unit 1: Getting to know Standard 7 or Standard 8	33
Theme 4 Unit 2: Supporting learning in the classroom	55
Theme 4 Unit 3: Supporting group work	69
Theme 4 Unit 4: Supporting the individual learner	85
Theme 4 Unit 5: Reflecting and looking ahead	101
Theme 5: Social issues in education	109
Theme 5 Unit 1: The Life Skills Curriculum and cross cutting issues in education	115
Theme 5 Unit 2: Attitudes to learning	127
Theme 5 Unit 3: Supporting differentiated activities	141
Theme 5 Unit 4: Contributing to assessment and record keeping	151
Theme 5 Unit 5: Finish and review	161
Theme 6: Supporting learning and transitions	169
Theme 6 Unit 1: Supporting girls’ learning across the curriculum	175
Theme 6 Unit 2: Extra-curricular activities: opportunities for girls to learn	189
Theme 6 Unit 3: Working for success in examinations	205
Theme 6 Unit 4: Making the transition to secondary school	223
Theme 6 Unit 5: Review your learning and update your Personal Statement	237

Your role as a Mentor in the KGIS programme

Continuing as a Mentor

You have been mentoring a Scholar in the Malawi Keeping Girls in School (KGIS) Access to Teaching Scholarship project because you are an experienced primary teacher in Malawi. Your continued involvement in the project will offer the Teaching Assistant further opportunity to learn from your experiences and your expertise as a primary school teacher.

The first year of mentoring the Teaching Assistant has given you the opportunity to develop your own professional skills. During the time the Teaching Assistant is spending in the second of her 2 years in the 'School Experience' programme, you, as her Mentor, will help her to give her insight into the teaching and learning in the primary school, to advise her on how to support the teaching and learning in a Standard 7 or 8 class in her second year, and to understand how to support students to make the transition through to secondary school.

Your frequent and regular discussions with the Teaching Assistant every 2 weeks will give you the continued opportunity to reflect regularly on all the teaching and learning which takes place in all the years of primary school. Your colleagues, the school you work in, and your local community will continue to benefit from the skills you develop as a Mentor.

Developing mentoring skills

Through mentoring you have been learning how to support another person who is developing in a profession. Mentoring is a way of helping a new member of staff or someone who is thinking of joining the profession. As a Mentor, you have provided advice from your experience. Mentoring requires communication skills and the ability to inspire confidence. Mentoring is listening, supporting and guiding.

Remember that as a mentor you have NOT been supervising and you should not do so this year. You do not tell the other person exactly what to do, and you are not responsible for solving the other person's problems. You are there to listen, to make suggestions, to offer advice, and to be positive and encouraging.

We hope that being a Mentor has already benefited you. As a Mentor on this Keeping Girls in School (KGIS) project, you can continue to be a strong role model for girls and women. Mentoring can continue to help you to appreciate your own knowledge, skills and experience. Being a Mentor is a professional achievement. By the end of this year, you should have developed expertise which you will be able to use widely in your school and community.

These Teaching Assistants are developing their skills this year through working with Standard 7 or Standard 8 girl students and it is important that you support them in the empowerment of girls and women through education

Your role as a Mentor in Year 2 of the KGIS programme

So, congratulations on your achievements so far in working on the Keeping Girls in School (KGIS) Access to Teaching Scholarship Programme as a Mentor. This is an exciting opportunity for you to support girls' education in your community and your own personal and professional development. The women Teaching Assistants you are working with are taking on responsibilities as a role model to girl students in the primary school. And you are also a role model for these women as a teacher and Mentor. By the example the Teaching Assistant set for learners, especially for girls, they will encourage learners to stay in school, and your support in this is crucial.

Thank you for continuing to be a Mentor for a Scholar in your school! We hope you find this experience rewarding, interesting and beneficial.

The 'Keeping Girls in School' (KGIS) Access to Teaching Scholarship Programme

The 4 year 'Keeping Girls in School' programme runs from 2013 to 2016 and is funded by DFID Malawi. The Open University (OU) UK is partnered in this project by FAWEMA, the Forum for African Women Educationalists-Malawi.

This project aims to help keep girls in school by recruiting more women from rural communities in Malawi into primary schools. The two year Scholarships provide pathways into teacher training whilst encouraging the women to remain in their community. For the Teaching Assistant, the Scholarship combines a two year 'School Experience' programme as a Teaching Assistant, attached to a local primary school, with structured study to upgrade her Malawi Certificate of Secondary Education qualifications to a level where she can apply to teacher training. During the 2 year School Experience, the Scholar acts as a role model, supporting girls and girls' education in the school.

The Scholarship will increase the number and presence of women in primary schools, especially in areas where there are few women members of staff. The Scholarship is for 2000 women in 4 districts across Malawi.

Each scholarship provides:

- Placements for Teaching Assistants in primary schools for 2 years, helping in Standard 1 or Standard 2 in the first year and in Standard 7 or Standard and 8 in the second year. The Scholar/Teaching Assistant follows a comprehensive week by week School Experience programme for the 2 years, and she is provided with all the materials for this. In her School Experience, the Teaching Assistant is supported by a Mentor – you! – because you are an experienced primary teacher in or near the placement school. As a Mentor, you are provided with this Mentoring Guide, which takes you step by step through how to support the Teaching Assistant.
- The Scholar is also provided with distance learning materials and tutorial support for MSCE study (in the priority subjects: Maths, Physical Science, Biology and English). The Scholar is supported by MSCE tutors who are qualified secondary teachers.
- Support for a Teacher Training application. Scholars will need support and advice as they study for MSCE, and help in the primary school.

They will need to talk with someone who has experience as a primary teacher and who knows the placement school.

The role of Mentor

There are two main objectives for you in your role:

- Supporting girls' education through your work with the women Scholars/Teaching Assistants
- Developing your own professional skills in teaching and leadership through your work as a Mentor.

Both these objectives are important. You have a vital role in guiding the Teaching Assistants through their second year of their School Experience

Your role as a Mentor to the Scholars in Year 2 as they work in Standard 7 or Standard 8

During the second year that the Teaching Assistants are in school, they will be working in a class in either Standard 7 or Standard 8. Unless they have had to move schools, they will now know how the school works, the basics of how they can assist in the classroom, and they will know the students in the school.

They have established themselves in your school and hopefully they are now known and respected for their work. Remember in this year, Year 2, they will be working with much older students in Standard 7 or Standard 8 and this will be a new kind of challenge to them. So it is important in Year 2 that they need to continue to be supported: they need to develop an understanding of how to support the curriculum and learning at the upper end of the school and how to be role models to the students in the school.

Their experience of studying again for MSCE is going to be helpful to them as they support older students in the primary school as the learners move towards examination and transition to secondary school. The Scholar/Teaching Assistants are going to need your support in working with older students.

Their School Experience Year 2 programme aims to develop their confidence and clarify their new role, identifying tasks and activities they will undertake during their School Experience days in your school. As an experienced teacher yourself, your role as a Mentor will be crucial to help their induction to the school and their role as Teaching Assistants in Standards 7 or 8 classrooms.

Your role in Year 2 as a Mentor includes providing advice and guidance based on your experience as a teacher by:

- supporting the Teaching Assistant/Scholar's induction to the upper classes of the school and helping her to know how these classes are run;
- helping the Scholar to understand the roles of the other adults supporting Standard 7 and 8 and how they impact on the learners' learning and development;
- supporting the Scholar to become familiar with the school curriculum in Standards 7 and 8;

- helping the Teaching Assistant to develop her confidence and gain the respect of Standard 7 and 8 students;
- supporting the Scholar in her role as a Teaching Assistant alongside the class teacher to support groups of learners following guidance and advice from the teacher;
- working with the Scholar to develop her presence as a role model in the school;
- helping the Scholar to identify and discuss some of the obstacles girls encounter in their lives to complete primary school;
- developing with the Scholar and the Standard 7 and 8 teachers ideas about how some of these obstacles might be overcome.

Your Professional development

It is also important that you are gaining from your involvement in this programme. Your work with the Scholars/Teaching Assistants during the 2 years of their programme is helping you to develop your expertise in mentoring any new person working within a school. You are learning the kinds of skills which will stand you in good stead if you are asked to guide a less experienced member of staff. You are increasing your knowledge and understanding of leadership.

Materials

Your learning as a Mentor is coming primarily from the written Mentor materials which we are providing you with here. The materials provide a step by step guide to your role, guiding you through what the Scholar is doing in each step of her 2 year School Experience and what your role is in relation to her learning.

The Mentor Handbook includes all the School Experience materials the Scholars use. It is important that you understand all the step by step detail of the School Experience programme they are following each week. So in each unit we have added material at the beginning and end to support you in your role as Mentor and to give you guidance about what the Scholar is doing.

Within the written Mentor materials, at the end of each unit there is also space for you for your own written reflection and questions about your own learning as each unit progresses.

It continues to be important for your own professional development that you meet regularly with your Head teacher. In our guidance to the Head teachers we suggest that they meet with the Mentor every 2 weeks during the school year. This is in order to ensure that the Head teacher continues to monitor the progress of the Scholar/Teaching Assistant and knows about her successes and about any difficulties she is experiencing. It is also so that the Head teacher understands all the work that you are doing to help the Scholar/Teaching Assistant in their role and how your professional development is progressing. The Head teacher should sign your Handbook after each meeting with you.

Workshops

A reminder that we also provide you with professional development through face to face teaching and support. You have had an induction workshop at the beginning of your work with the project. You were given a thorough face to face induction into your role, in order to clarify the expectations of how you carry out your work as Mentor and how it contributes to the overall success of the programme.

Your role has been explained to you through briefings conducted by experienced teacher educators, through seminar sessions with experienced Mentors, through roleplay and through question and answer sessions.

During the first workshop you met the Scholar or Scholars you are working with and planned how you would work to guide them through Year 1 of their School Experience. You and the Scholar(s) also met with the Head teacher of the school where you work/the Teaching Assistant is placed and discussed the role and the work of the Scholar/Teaching Assistant.

There is a second workshop as you begin Year 2 of your work as Mentor, so that you can have an extensive opportunity to review your role and all your learning as a Mentor during Year 1, and prepare your role as Mentor in Year 2, for the Scholars/Teaching Assistants' work in a Standard 7 or Standard 8 class. You are again being thoroughly briefed in the role and in the content of Year 2 of the School Experience programme through briefings conducted by experienced teacher educators, through roleplay and through question and answer sessions

You are also, as you begin your second year as a Mentor, collaborating in this workshop with any new Mentors who are beginning to support the Scholars/Teaching Assistants in the School Experience programme. You are in a position in this workshop to pass on the expertise you have gained so far as a Mentor, share the experiences you have gained from working with the Scholars during Year 1, and discuss the benefits, expectations and challenges with the new Mentors who are just beginning their role.

Dialogue with the Scholar

During the second year of the programme, you will be working with the Scholar, helping her to reflect on her own development as a Teaching Assistant supporting the class teacher and working with groups of learners in Standards 7 or 8. For most of you (except in cases, say, where the Teaching Assistant has changed school), you will be building on a professional relationship which began last year. This relationship between the Scholar and yourself, her Mentor, is a reciprocal learning experience where you can both learn from each other and help each other to develop further in your own roles. Throughout this year you will continue with your professional dialogue with the Teaching Assistant, which will help you to develop your own professional practice as well as your mentoring skills. A reminder that both you and the Scholar will write your own reflections about some of these dialogues. This will help you to record your own thoughts on your professional practice and how it is developing as the programme progresses through your final year as a Mentor to this Scholar/Teaching Assistant.

Dialogue with your Head teacher

Importantly, as we detail above, this year we again want you to discuss the progress of the Scholar and your own professional development as Mentor with your Head teacher. It is vital that the Head teacher is kept fully informed of the detail of the Scholar's progress. It is also important for you that the Head teacher is kept fully informed of the detail of your progress as a Mentor.

Dialogue with other members of your school community

As Year 2 progresses, you will also have the opportunity to get further feedback from other colleagues such as other teachers and student teachers in your school, and from other adults in the community, on the impact your role as a Mentor has had more generally on your work in the school and in the community. This will allow you to reflect on your own professional development and identify skills you are gaining as a Mentor which can be transferred to other areas of your professional life.

When you complete Year 2 of mentoring you will have:

- Guided the Scholars through Year 2 of their School Experience
- Helped the Scholar in supporting girls in Standard 7 and Standard 8
- Met with the Scholar every 2 weeks and in each meeting helped them to understand how to establish themselves as role models for learners, especially for girl students.
- Guided the Scholars' writing in their School Experience Handbook, helping them to reflect on their own learning
- Discussed the progress of the Scholar with the Head teacher every 2 weeks
- Reflected at regular intervals (set out in your Mentoring Guide) on your own professional development
- Written your reflections into your Mentoring Handbook for review
- Discussed your own professional development as a Mentor with a fellow teacher, parent or member of the community
- Discussed your own professional development as a Mentor with your Head teacher
- Developed as a role model in terms of your own behaviour and attitudes towards women and girls in school.

Supporting the Scholar

As a Mentor in this programme, you have three important tasks:

- a) Supporting the Scholar in her School Experience. You should meet with the Scholar every 2 weeks during the school year to discuss her progress and to help her plan her School Experience tasks. In this Mentor Handbook you will find a calendar where the meetings are identified – but it will help the Scholar if you have informal discussions more frequently. You may find that you have chats with the Scholar during the school week, after the Scholar

has completed an activity or when she is preparing her next one. You should also be willing and able to help the Scholar meet other professionals such as colleagues in other schools, at the Teacher Development Centre or in the district generally.

- b) Signing the Scholar's School Experience Handbook at the end of each unit of study. We suggest you ensure you read the units along with the Scholar to allow you to support her in her role and to familiarise yourself with your role. At the end of each unit there is a space for the Scholar to write a short report and self-evaluation. There is also a space for you to write comments on how the Scholar is doing. By signing each unit, you and the Scholar will confirm that you have had time to discuss her progress. Before signing the unit, you should discuss with the Scholar what she has found easy and difficult since your last meeting, and what she needs to plan for the weeks ahead. Help her to describe what she has seen and done, and learned in the school. In this conversation you might also give her some tips or advice on how to overcome difficulties she might face in her School Experience.
- c) Writing your reflections on your own professional development: in this Mentor's folder, you will find space at the end of each unit to write your thoughts on how your own professional practice is developing as a consequence of your role as a Mentor in the programme. You should include your reflections, but indicating examples of activities that have led you to develop such a skill or attribute.

The Mentor's meeting with the Teaching Assistant

Invite the Scholar to describe what she has done so far, looking together at the specific activity or activities in the School Experience units of study.

- Encourage the Scholar to talk about what has gone well.
- Look together at the next activity (or activities).
- Discuss what the Scholar needs to do to prepare.
- If something has not gone well, talk with the Scholar to understand why it did not go well and how she can do better.
- At the end of a unit, sign and date the Scholar's School Experience Handbook.

After the meeting you should take some time to reflect on how the meeting has gone and complete your own reflections in your Mentor Handbook. You might want to identify 1 or 2 aspects you want to concentrate on at the next meeting.

In each unit of the Mentor Handbook, you will also find suggestions of aspects you can discuss with the Scholar in your meetings.

The School Experience Framework

The Scholar/Teaching Assistant will work through all the units in Theme 4, Theme 5 and Theme 6 during this second year. The 3 themes cover roughly one term's work each, but there is some flexibility for the Teaching Assistant to progress more rapidly or more slowly through the units.

What to do if things go wrong

As a Mentor you will be helping Scholars to find their way – to develop knowledge, confidence and skills as classroom helpers. You must always remember that the Scholar is not a teacher. She is a woman who aspires to become a teacher and who should be acting as a role model in the school and her community. On top of all this, she will have many responsibilities in her home. There are times when she might feel discouraged and tired. She needs your professional support.

Your encouragement can help a Scholar to manage her School Experience and her Teaching Assistant role this year. But it is up to each individual Scholar to succeed. If a Scholar is not doing well, there are actions you can take.

- If a Scholar is not helping in the classroom, talk to the class teacher or head teacher to see what can be done. Try to find out if the problem is the Scholar's attitude, or if the class teacher is not sure how to manage the Scholar.
- If a Scholar is absent, it is not your job to go and find her. Report the absence to the Head teacher - who can then alert District Education Manager. The bursary will be removed if a Scholar is not in school.
- If a Scholar is not doing the School Experience tasks and writing, see if she needs time off from helping in the classroom to catch up.
- If a Scholar is given too much responsibility – such as managing a class alone – you should speak to the Head teacher – who will talk to the District Education Manager. The Scholarship strongly discourages this situation.
- If a Scholar is told by the Head teacher to work longer hours, you should discuss this situation directly with the District Education Manager or with FAWEMA.
- If a Scholar is not getting support from her husband or her family to study and do School Experience, you might talk to these people about the goals of the programme..
- If a Scholar is very upset you can be encouraging. You can try to help her find the way forward. But you can not fix every problem in her life, and she will need to find her own solution.

Scholars and Mentors as role models

During the school day, many of the girl learners will be looking up to you, to female teachers in the school and particularly to the Teaching Assistants in the school to learn from them. All staff at the school, including the Teaching Assistants, should behave appropriately and lead by example for the girl learners to have positive attitudes to learning, cleanliness, physical presence and relationships with others, to continue attending school and participating in school life. In your role as Mentor, whatever your gender, you need to keep this in mind and encourage the Scholars you support to do so too.

At your regular meetings with the Scholars, you should take some time to discuss how they think they have been a role model to girls in school, and how you have also been a role model to girls and to the Teaching Assistants.

Finally:

School Mentors are one of the most important parts of the KGIS Scholarship Programme. Without you, the programme could not happen. Mentors help Scholars see how a real school works and what it means in reality to be a teacher. The success of the programme so far is the result of excellent mentoring for Scholars in schools. So, thank you for being a Mentor and helping women's educational opportunities in Malawi.

School Experience Framework Year 2

THEME 4 Working with others and learning from them	THEME 5 Social issues in education	THEME 6 Supporting learning and transitions
Unit 1: Getting to know Standard 7 or Standard 8	Unit 1: The life-skills curriculum and cross cutting issues in education	Unit 1: Supporting girls' learning across the curriculum
Unit 2: Supporting learning in the classroom	Unit 2: Attitudes to learning	Unit 2: Extra-curricular activities: opportunities for girls to learn
Unit 3: Supporting group work	Unit 3: Supporting differentiated activities	Unit 3: Working for success in examinations
Unit 4: Supporting the individual learner	Unit 4: Contributing to assessment and record keeping	Unit 4: Making the transition to secondary school
Unit 5: Reflecting and looking ahead	Unit 5: Finish and review	Unit 5: Review your learning and update your Personal Statement

Mentor's Handbook

Introduction

Congratulations on continuing in this programme as a Mentor. You have had a busy and successful first year assisting the Scholar/Teaching Assistant in their ambitions to work in a school and, for some of them, gain qualifications which allow them to apply for teacher training. This continues as an exciting opportunity for you to support girls' education in your community and work towards your own personal and professional development. The Teaching Assistants you are working with are taking the responsibility as role models in the primary school, but you yourself need to continue acting as a good role model for the Scholar as a teacher and Mentor. By the example the Scholars set for learners, especially for girls, they will encourage learners to stay in school, and your support continues to be crucial.

The Scholarship is a two-year programme and has two parts:

- the School Experience placement in Standards 1 and 2, and
- the School Experience placement in Standards 7 and 8.

The Scholar's weeks will again be very busy. She will be helping in a Standard 7 or Standard 8 classroom as a Teaching Assistant. As she does this, she will continue working through distance study materials (the School Experience materials) to develop her knowledge, skills and understanding of the teaching and learning process.

In the school she has your continued support as her Mentor. And there should also be at least one other KGIS Scholar/Teaching Assistant in the school. You might be Mentor to all of them, or the other Scholar/Teaching Assistant could have another mentor, but it is important the Teaching Assistants work together and support each other through their School Experience.

In this pack you have:

A: The School Experience Framework

The framework gives you the structure of the school experience work the Scholar completes. The framework has three themes and within each theme there are units of study that are a mixture of reading, writing and practical activities.

B: The 'Who's who guide'

This explains who the people involved in the Scholarship Programme are. On the left side you can see the people the Scholar will work with in school: the class teachers, the learners, other adults (teachers or others), you as her Mentor and other Scholars. The class teachers and you (her Mentor) will be experienced primary teachers in your school who will advise her during her school experience. On the right side you can see the people who will support the Scholar outside of the primary school: professionals in the Teacher

Development Centre, education officials in the district and the zone, her family and her community. The Scholar's family, friends and people in her community can encourage her studies but you also have an important role to play in her development as a Teaching Assistant in the school

C: Using the study units

This explains how to use a unit and the typical information in it.

Each study unit will last approximately two weeks, though there is flexibility to move more rapidly or more slowly. A reminder that when we speak about two weeks of School Experience, we mean the days the Scholar/Teaching Assistant will be in placement in her local school.

In the framework, you will see that the themes have different colours. This also happens in the Handbook to help you and the Scholars to identify where you are.

All the units the Scholars will be working on during their School Experience have the same format. You will see an example of a unit template with each section explained in the next pages. Some of the things they will do in school, for example when they have to plan a practical activity. For these activities the Scholars might ask you for help or suggestions to organise the activities. But there are other times when they can read and write at home.

At the end of each unit, we also have left a space for the Scholars to sign and date the unit, to confirm they have completed it. If you look at the study calendar of the School Experience in the next pages you will see that we have indicated where you should have a scheduled meeting with your Scholar(s)/ Teaching Assistant(s). In that meeting, you will discuss the Scholar's progress and look ahead to what they are going to work on. After the meeting, you should sign the units the Scholar(s) have already completed.

There is also space at the end of each unit for you to write your reflections on your professional development and how working with the Scholar and through the School Experience Handbook has impacted in your role as a Mentor and in your work as a teacher.

In the next pages, you will find the study calendars for the School Experience for each term of Year 2. And after these, the Scholar' School Experience work as a Teaching Assistant begins and your work as a Mentor starts too. In each unit we will identify one or two aspects you might want to concentrate on when you meet with the Scholar(s) to discuss their progress, before you sign off their units.

D: The School Experience study calendars

A reminder that this is what the Scholars/Teaching Assistants have been told about your role as Mentors.

E: Information for the Scholars on you as their Mentor

A reminder that this is what the Scholars/Teaching Assistants have been told about your role as Mentors.

Your Mentor is an experienced primary teacher from a primary school in Malawi. She or he is a teacher in your school, but might not be the teacher in

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

We wish you every success in your role as a Mentor in the KGIS programme.

Muyende bwino and Good Luck!

Moni! I am a Mentor in the Keeping Girls in School (KGIS) Access into Teaching Scholarship Programme.

My name is.....and I am a teacher
in Standard.....in..... Primary School in
.....District

I am mentoring KGIS Scholars/Teaching Assistants who are local women engaged in a two year programme that trains them to help teachers and to support learners. Last year they were assisting the teacher and learners in Standard 1 or 2, and this year they will be helping in Standard 7 or 8 class.

I am a Mentor to.....KGIS Teaching Assistants/Scholar(s). Below are their names and the class and teacher they are working with this year:

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

There are two main aspects of my role as a Mentor:

- Supporting girls' education through my work with the women Scholars/ Teaching Assistant
- Developing my own professional skills in teaching and leadership through my work as a Mentor

The KGIS Scholars are not teachers. They help teachers and learners. They also have a special job to encourage girls to stay in school.

Here are some of kinds of support they will provide this year:

- support for the learner
- support for the teacher
- support for the curriculum
- support for the school

and in this second year, each term they will

- assist Standard 7/Standard 8 learners and the teacher in specific ways
- do a small project to benefit the classroom
- investigate an issue of importance to the school and the community

During lessons, while the teacher is teaching they will;

- Interrupt learners' conversations
- Help learners form groups
- Encourage learners to pay attention
- Answer a learner's question
- Help a learner to answer the teacher's question
- Explain something to a learner
- Distribute and collect resources
- Give feedback to learners
- Correct learners as they work
- Ensure that resources are shared
- Tell the teacher of a learner's difficulty
- Prevent intimidation of girls
- Show disapproval of bad behaviour
- Set an example – show how to listen and respond
- Encourage participation by girls
- Stop a learner from bothering others
- Mark papers
- Prepare worksheets or handouts
- Prepare resources
- Organise teaching, learning and assessment resources

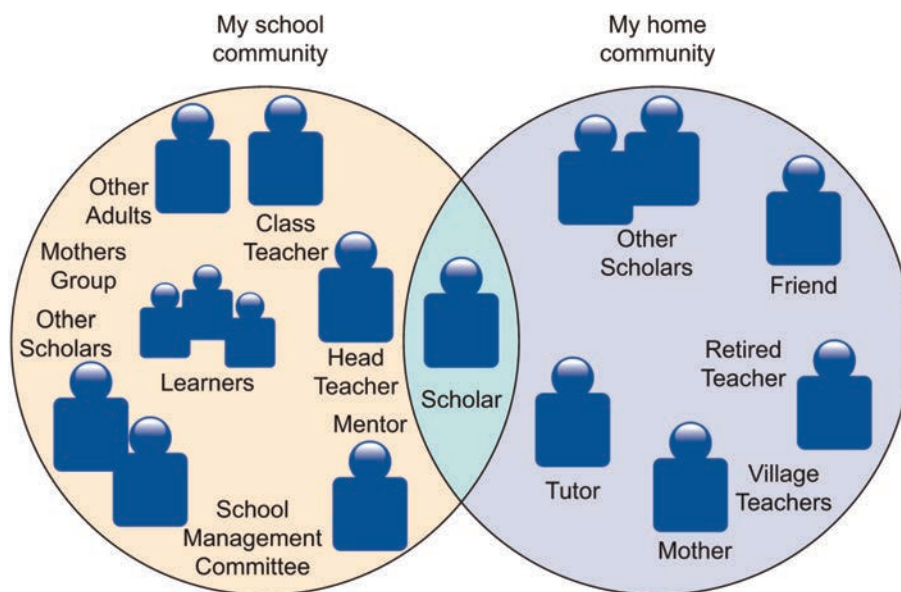
They will also continue to assist in other practical activities such as:

- Prepare and tidy the classroom
- Call the register
- Help the teacher to maintain discipline
- With the teacher's guidance, take learners for additional practice or revision
- Write in the sick book, the punishment book and the progress book
- Advise girls who are at risk of leaving school
- Help to prevent harassment of girls
- Be a strong role model for all learners

Who's who guide

There are many people involved in the KGIS Access into Teaching Scholarship Programme. As you can see in this diagram, the Teaching Assistant/Scholar is at the centre of it all and you are an important part of her support circle in the primary school. Around the Scholar, there are her family, friends, and others who can help her.

On the left side you can see the people the Scholar/Teaching Assistant will work with in school: the class teachers, the learners, other adults (teachers or others), you as her Mentor and other scholars. The class teachers and you (her Mentor) are experienced primary teachers in your school who will advise her during her School Experience. On the right side you can see the people who will support the Scholar outside of the primary school: professionals in the Teacher Development Centre, education officials in the district and the zone, her family and her community. The Scholar's family, friends and people in her community can encourage her studies but you also have an important role to play in her development as a Teaching Assistant in the school.



Using the study units

An explanation of the how each unit in the Scholar/ Teaching Assistant’s School Experience programme is set out, and some of the terms used

Introduction to each unit

The introduction to the unit sets the scene and describes the School Experience activities the Scholars have to complete. Each unit is a topic which they will study for two weeks and sometimes for three/four weeks in their placement school.

‘When you complete this unit you will have developed’

This section in a unit in the Scholar/Teaching Assistant’s School Experience Handbook describes the knowledge, understanding or skills the Scholars will develop as they carry out a unit of study.

This is an important section for you as a Mentor as it will inform you about what you can discuss at the regular meetings you have every 2 weeks with the Scholar to discuss her progress and development.

‘In this unit you will read the following terms’

We sometimes provide definitions of words which the Teaching Assistant will read in a unit, for example: “syllabus”, “outcome” and “assessment standard”.

‘Timing’

A unit of School Experience activity will take the Teaching Assistant approximately four hours – not four hours all at once, but at different times during the days the Scholars are in the school. In the four hours they will do some reading, some writing, and some practical activities. They will also, of course, be helping the teacher and learners in the classroom alongside some of these activities.

When they start a new unit, they should look at the whole unit first to understand what they need to plan and do. It is important that you also understand in detail what is involved in each unit, to be able to support the Scholars.

Sometimes they will need to make time for an activity or a discussion. As a Mentor you have to be familiar with the activities the Scholars are working on, those they need to prepare and areas where they might need your help to set up an activity.

We all read and write at different speeds, and take different amounts of time to accomplish the same tasks. Scholars should not compare themselves with others about how quickly or slowly they work through a unit of School Experience.

‘Study activity’

This is a part of the unit for the Teaching Assistants where there is a reading to get Scholars, and yourself, thinking. It may be a real life example about a Scholar, a learner or a school. It may be a reading from an academic book or a report. Some of these readings could also help you to reflect on your own practice as a teacher and your own professional development.

‘Practical activity’

This is something Teaching Assistants will do in the school, with learners or with other adults. They will usually do some writing about this activity, and this is an aspect you would discuss at your regular meetings every 2 weeks with the Scholar(s), exploring aspects that worked well or difficulties they encountered.

‘Review’

In this part, Teaching Assistants look again at what they have covered in the unit and write a short report and self-assessment on what they have done and about their own progress.

There is also a space for you as their Mentor to write comments about the Scholars’ progress and a place for you to sign.

‘Mentor Reflection’

This is important for your professional development. At the end of each unit, when you have guided the Teaching Assistant through those specific activities which are part of the unit, and have helped her to reflect on them and review her own progress, it is important that you in turn write your own reflections on what specific skills you have utilised or developed during the unit, and how the specific work you have done with the Scholar(s) during this unit has impacted on your own teaching practice and your own professional development.

Teaching Assistant's Year 2 Introduction

Teaching Assistant's Introduction

Welcome back to school. We hope you have had time, during the long break from school, to think usefully about your experiences as a Teaching Assistant.

You should now organise your School Experience Handbook and any other study materials you normally use when you help in the school. In these first weeks you should ensure you have time to meet your Mentor and discuss Year 2 of School Experience with him or her.

You should also ask your Mentor to introduce you to the head teacher and other teachers in your school. Some of them will remember you from last year, but some might be new to the school, so you might need to explain to them what your role is in school, like you did last year.

This year, you will assist older learners and work with a new teacher in Standard 7 or Standard 8. As you do this, you will continue to develop:

- knowledge of different Learning Areas in the primary school curriculum
- skills in supporting learning activities
- skills in making and using learning resources
- skills as a role model
- understanding of issues in the society that affect learning – especially for girls
- understanding of teaching and assessment methods

The second year of the programme consists of three Themes. These are:

Theme 4: Working with others and learning from them

Theme 5: Social issues in education

Theme 6: Supporting learning and transitions

Each Theme will have 5 study units. Each unit is for approximately two weeks of study and work experience. The fifth unit in each Theme will give you time to complete and review your previous weeks of study and work experience, and to set yourself goals or objectives to work on in the next terms.

For each Theme you will:

- read about teaching and assessment methods
- assist learners and the teacher in specific ways
- do a small project to benefit the classroom
- investigate an issue of importance to the school and the community.

The focus of this programme is **Keeping Girls in School**. As you read and do the activities, pay attention to what girls in the classroom are doing. Offer them your help, as much as you can. Talk to your Mentor and your teacher about what you can do to support the education of girls. Present yourself as a good role model for girls in your classroom.

The 'Keeping Girls in School' (KGIS) Access to Teaching Scholarship Programme

The 4 year 'Keeping Girls in School' programme runs from 2013 to 2016 and is funded by DFID Malawi. The Open University (OU) UK is partnered in this project by FAWEMA, the Forum for African Women Educationalists-Malawi.

This project aims to help keep girls in school by recruiting more women from rural communities in Malawi into primary schools. The two year Scholarships provide pathways into teacher training whilst encouraging the women to remain in their community. The Scholarship combines a two year 'School Experience' programme as a Teaching Assistant, attached to a local primary school, with structured study to upgrade your Malawi Certificate of Secondary Education qualifications to a level where you can apply to teacher training. During the 2 year School Experience, in your role as a Teaching Assistant you act as a role model, supporting girls and girls' education in the school.

The Scholarship will increase the number and presence of women in primary schools, especially in areas where there are few women members of staff. The Scholarship is for 2000 women in 4 districts across Malawi.

Each scholarship provides:

- Placements for you as a Teaching Assistants in primary schools for 2 years, helping in Standard 1 or Standard 2 in the first year and in Standard 7 or Standard and 8 in the second year. You follow a comprehensive week by week School Experience programme for the 2 years, and you are provided with all the materials for this. In your School Experience, you are supported by a Mentor – an experienced primary teacher in or near the placement school.
- In Year 1 you were provided with distance learning materials and tutorial support for MSCE study (in the priority subjects: Maths, Physical Science, Biology and English). For your MSCE study you were supported by MSCE tutors who are qualified secondary teachers.
- Support for a Teacher Training application.

Your role as a Teaching Assistant in Year 2 as you work in Standard 7 or Standard 8

During the second year that you are in school, you will be working in a class in either Standard 7 or Standard 8. Unless you have had to move schools, you will know how the school works, the basics of how you can assist in the classroom, and you will know the learners in the school.

In Year 1 you have established yourself in your school and you should now be known and respected for your work. Remember in this year, Year 2, you will be working with much older students in Standard 7 or Standard 8 and this will be a new kind of challenge to you. So it is important in Year 2 that you develop an understanding of how to support the curriculum and learning at the upper end of the school and how to be role models to the students in the school. Your Mentor and the Head teacher will assist you in this.

Your experience of studying again for MSCE is going to be helpful to you as you support older students in the primary school as the learners move towards examination and transition to secondary school.

Dialogue with Your Mentor

During the second year of the programme, you will be working with your Mentor who will be helping you to reflect on your own development as a Teaching Assistant supporting the class teacher and working with groups of learners in Standards 7 or 8. For most of you (except in cases, say, where you have changed school), you will be building on a professional relationship which began last year. This relationship between the Mentor and yourself, is a reciprocal learning experience where you can both learn from each other and help each other to develop further in your own roles.

Throughout this year you will continue with your professional dialogue with your Mentor in the regular meetings you have every two weeks. Both you and your Mentor will write your own reflections about some of these dialogues at the end of each unit. This will help you to record your own thoughts on your professional practice and how it is developing as the programme progresses through your final year as a Scholar and Teaching Assistant in the KGIS programme.

Your meeting with your Mentor

At your regular meetings with your Mentor you will be able to:

- describe what you have done so far, looking with your Mentor at the specific activity or activities in the School Experience units of study,
- talk about what has gone well,
- look together at the next activities in the following Unit,
- discuss what you need to do to prepare.

If something has not gone well, talk with your Mentor to understand why it did not go well and how you can do better.

At the end of each unit, remember to sign and date your School Experience Handbook and ask your mentor to do so also.

Study Calendar – Term 1

Date	School Term Dates	Week No.	SCHOOL EXPERIENCE Year 2		
			Theme	Unit	Mentor Meeting
	School term 1	1	Introduction and Orientation		Meeting
		2	T4: Working with others and learning from them	U1: Getting to know Standard 7 or Standard 8	
		3			Meeting
		4		U2: Supporting learning in the classroom	
		5			Meeting
		6		U3: Supporting group work	
		7			Meeting
		8			
		9		U4: Supporting the individual learner	Meeting
		10		U5: Reflecting and looking ahead	
		11			Meeting
		12		Review of Theme 4	
		13			Meeting
		14			

Study Calendar – Term 2

Date	School Term Dates	Week No.	SCHOOL EXPERIENCE Year 2		
			Theme	Unit	Mentor Meeting
	School term 2	1	T5: Social issues in education	U1: The life-skills curriculum and cross cutting issues in education	Meeting
		2			
		3		U2: Attitudes to learning Classroom project: Book making	Meeting
		4			
		5		U3: Supporting differentiated activities	Meeting
		6			
		7		U4: Contributing to assessment and record keeping	Meeting
		8			
		9		U5: Finish and review	Meeting
		10			

Study Calendar – Term 3

Date	School Term Dates	Week No.	SCHOOL EXPERIENCE Year 2		
			Theme	Unit	Mentor Meeting
	School term 3	1	T6: Supporting subject learning and preparing for secondary school	U1: Supporting girls' learning across the curriculum	Meeting
		2			
		3		U2: Extra-curricular activities: opportunities for girls to learn	Meeting
		4			
		5		U3: Working for success in examinations	Meeting
		6			
		7		U4: Making the transition to secondary school	Meeting
		8			
		9		Unit 5: Review your learning and update your Personal Statement	Meeting
		10			



Forum for African Women
Educationalists in Malawi
(FAWEMA)

*"Supporting Girls and Women to
Acquire Education for
Development"*



The Open
University



Keeping Girls in School scholarship programme
Funded by UKaid from the UK government