On behalf of the Faculty of Education, and also in my new role as a committee member of ACTEQ, I would like to extend my very warm welcome to the school principals, vice principals, practicum co-ordinators and committed mentors (both experienced and new).

This afternoon we shall share the experience of using a ‘whole school mentoring support’ approach to bring about teacher professional development to both experienced teachers in the schools and to our student teachers who are about to join the teaching profession.

I believe what our Faculty is promoting on ‘whole school mentoring support’ approach is in line with the latest announcement made by ACTEQ on 29 May 2008 by Professor Cheng Kai Ming on ‘Professional Development for Beginning Teachers’.

The recommendation of the ‘Induction Tool Kit’ for all primary and secondary schools offers a guiding framework for beginning teachers to build up their portfolio and to demonstrate their professional competencies in the first stage of their professional journey. The development of the induction programme and the induction tools have crucial importance to offer timely help and needy support to the beginning teachers who join the profession in their first year of teaching.

The recommendation also offers direction and suggestions to experienced teachers to carry out their mentoring responsibility to the new blood. This is with the belief that all experienced teachers should shoulder this responsibility by forming a nurturing mentoring force to create a supportive and caring environment for beginning teachers. This will help to ensure that beginning teachers stay in the profession and make progress in their professional journey together with the mentoring teachers.

Our Faculty is committed to prepare beginning teachers to enable them to join the professional community in schools.

While they have the identity of ‘student teachers’ in pursuing their professional qualification in initial teacher education, they are required to demonstrate their capability to reach the base-line teaching competence to become beginning teachers. This is done through their practicum experience in a school.

Because of this, we also need to work closely with the experienced mentors in the schools.

Through this partnership forum, I hope we can demonstrate how schools and our Faculty can work hand in hand together. With this, we hope to bring about a fruitful outcome to the preparation of student teachers and beginning teachers. We can also build up a powerful task force of mentor teachers. The combined result is to enhance the success of different stages of professional growth in the Initial Teacher Education, induction and the continuing professional development within a ‘professional school’.

I hope you all have an enjoyable and fruitful forum this afternoon.