Good advice on student mentors

QUEENSLAND University of Technology has put out a call for more career mentors as it celebrates the 20th anniversary of its highly successful support scheme.

QUT Career Mentor Scheme began in 1993, with 30 students involved. It now places more than 600 students into mentor relationships in which they can learn and be guided firsthand from qualified professionals.

Career Mentor Scheme coordinator Jacqui Owen said businesspeople who participated in the scheme only needed to set aside around an hour a fortnight, which could include phone, email and face-to-face contact with their assigned student.

Mentors are particularly needed this year in fields including nutrition and dietetics, accountancy, medical imaging, interior design, industrial design, architecture, justice (customs, corrections, etc), engineering and marketing, PR and advertising.

“We always need more mentors so if you want to share your experience and expertise with a motivated student in your field, then we’d love to hear from you,” says Owen.

Student Jodie Lee is being mentored by leading Brisbane accountant Dan Carroll, who is an audit and assurance partner with Grant Thornton.

Carroll, a 1982 QUT accountancy graduate who has been involved in the program since 1999, says the early signs are great.

“I think Jodie will be one of my most enthusiastic mentorees,” he says.

Jodie, a mature-age student has been studying accountancy full-time and part-time since 2007. She combines uni work with caring for her young son and being treasurer of the QUT chapter of the Golden Key International Honour Society.

“Accounting just seemed like such a dynamic way to be involved with business – it puts you in the decision-making seat,” she says.

“Also, I wanted to do something that was as useful as a trade, where you really do learn a skill of value.”

Anyone interested in getting involved in the mentoring scheme can contact mentor@qut.edu.au