QUEENSLAND University of Technology is expecting a record 550 students to be paired with mentors this year as part of its long-running Career Mentor Scheme.

As a professional development tool that has evolved over 20 years, the scheme is highly regarded among industry leaders, many of whom have devoted 10 to 15 years to the program.

For students it is considered a unique networking opportunity and a chance to understand the workings of a job before drafting that first application letter.

Accounting, law and nursing have longstanding mentoring structures through the university, while new partnerships with medical imaging, radiography and interior design professionals are widening the program.

"If we teach it we would like to find mentors in it," says Career Mentor Scheme co-ordinator Jacqui Owen.

There are 100 lawyers and 70 accountants mentoring students, with many of them having longstanding involvement in the scheme.

Brisbane accountant Dan Carroll is one such veteran, having mentored accounting students since 1999.

His newest mentee is mature-age student and mother of one Jodie Lee, who is in the process of changing careers from marketing to accounting.

"The program is not designed necessarily to get a job in industry but to assist them to understand the opportunities that await them once they graduate from university," Carroll says.

"I have in the past critiqued resumes prior to them being sent out and arranged interviews with our current graduates so the students get a feel for what real work actually entails. I have even given some a practice interview, so they will be better prepared for when they go for interviews seeking that first job."

Lee says she is trying to step up her extra-curricular activities after hearing from her mentor: "They are a big part of getting ready for the workforce," she says.

To be part of the QUT Career Mentoring Scheme, email mentor@qutedu.au