The Teacher in Residency program, through the Department of Education and Child development, consisted of a number of visits to Flinders University’s Tonsley campus. As a teacher, with a number of years experience, it is often difficult to keep abreast of industry developments and cutting edge technologies. By meeting with lecturers, tutors and marketers at Tonsley, I have not only built professional working relationships but also links to industry, training and research, in a business and tertiary setting – essential for 21st Century pedagogy.

Flinders at Tonsley allows students to interact with business and researchers in areas such as engineering, medical devices and nanoscale technologies, to develop and market the new products and processes of the future. As Flinders at Tonsley is located in close proximity to Hamilton, the Secondary College where I teach a range of Arts, Design, Technology and IT based courses, this has provided me with the opportunity to collaborate with researchers and lecturers, when developing innovative secondary curriculum – during the residency and into the future.

Meeting with Sandy Walker, an Associate Professor in Product Design at Flinders has encouraged me to design curriculum around designing for needs based scenarios within the Health Industry. Knowing more about the courses offered at Flinders@Tonsley within the schools of Computer Science, Engineering and Mathematics, coupled with medical research and business, means that I can now design curriculum with tertiary destinations for secondary students at the forefront.

I had the fortune of shadowing a workshop session at Flinders@Tonsley, where secondary students were invited to participate in a design challenge. Listening to Sandy Walker’s lecture about design, particularly product design, was of great benefit.

Being exposed to projects completed by students at the University has given me the momentum to rejuvenate my secondary courses and ensure that they are up to date with where the business and health industries are moving. The Teacher in Residency program has highlighted the importance of cross-curricular projects and undertakings; particularly in a South Australian economy where innovation is needed in order to create jobs, in the wake of the wind-down of the many companies within the Manufacturing Industry.

Above all else, the Teacher in Residency program has allowed me to have release time in order to gain a wider perspective and a greater focus on real opportunities for students in terms of study, training, research; also the need to create employment through innovation and entrepreneurial endeavors and at the same time meet the needs of the community and bolster the economy, ethically and sustainably.