# Inside the 2025 New Educator Internship




For Simon Joachim and Ellie Aldred (seen to the right with SSTUWA Growth Team coordinator Chloe Hosking on the left), 2025 has been a busy year. As the inaugural participants in the union's Growth Team New Educator Internship, they've spent 12 months working alongside SSTUWA staff, visiting schools, attending graduate and university events and taking part in professional and industrial training — all while learning more about what it means to be both a public school teacher and unionist.

Reflecting on the experience, Simon said: "The Growth Team New Educator Internship has provided an opportunity to develop both industrially and professionally. By engaging with members in their workplaces, teachers at graduate events and pre-service teachers at universities, I have gained valuable insight into the strength of our union beyond my own immediate context."




**Pictured: 2025 Growth Team New Educator Intern, Simon Joachim, at a Graduate module in Albany, Western Australia (May 2025).**

**A year out of the classroom**

The internship is designed for early career teachers to gain experience working within the SSTUWA office while continuing their professional development. Over the year, Simon and Ellie became part of the Growth Team, responsible for recruitment, retention and engagement of new and early career members. Their days were varied – from speaking to teachers on school visits, to writing new educator communications, attending training sessions and contributing to union events and conferences.

“My role is to empower members and encourage all educators to engage with their union,” Ellie said.

“Being able to work with educators across the state to help access support to improve conditions for their colleagues, their students and themselves, has been extremely rewarding. By the end of the year we will have visited almost 400 schools and interacted with thousands of members.”

The internship also gave them the chance to connect with different teams across the organisation. Time spent with organisers and industrial officers provided a practical understanding of the many ways the SSTUWA supports and empowers all members.

**On the road: recruitment, retention and engagement**

A major goal of the year was the recruitment of early career and other educators. As early career teachers themselves, Simon and Ellie enjoyed connecting with graduates and new members, particularly through university visits, graduate modules and on-site school visits.

They attended modules and visited schools from Derby to Esperance and everywhere in between. This peer-to-peer recruitment approach helped deliver the strongest recruitment results the Growth Team has ever achieved.

Beyond recruitment, the interns supported a range of engagement programs, promoting participation in initiatives such as the State Council Guest Program, the New Educator Committee and the National New Educators Conference.

They also played a key role in developing communications and social media content, using their recent classroom experience to shape messages that spoke directly to early career teachers.

“Having just navigated the challenges of being a new educator gave me a lot of perspective and experience in supporting other new educators,” Ellie said.

“From information about graduate entitlements to snippets of information through social media, we have been able to

dissect some of the General Agreement and Award into new educator friendly resources so that all our new colleagues have access to knowledge about their entitlements and where to go to access support.”

**Taking it back to school**

Alongside their practical work, both interns took part in a structured professional learning program. This included industrial and public speaking training, growth coaching and courses through the Education and Training Centre. As the year draws to a close, Simon and Ellie are preparing to return to their schools with new insights and skills.

“My work with the SSTUWA this year will undoubtedly make me a better teacher and colleague,” Ellie said.

“I am excited to return to Carine Senior High School with so much more industrial and professional knowledge and experience.

“I will be using the knowledge and skills from this year to continue supporting colleagues at a branch level and to advocate for public education.”

At the start of the year, both Simon and Ellie recorded their confidence levels across a range of skills. By the end, they reported growth in every area: from engaging non-members in union discussions to working collaboratively with colleagues and school leaders.

Each intern also had the opportunity to design and deliver an individual project. Simon focused on improving the union’s engagement with pre-service teachers, building stronger links with Edith Cowan, Notre Dame and Murdoch universities, while Ellie created a handbook for future interns to support the continuation of the program.

“I am really motivated to go back to my role as a teacher at Seaforth Primary School,” Simon said.

“Whilst I have thoroughly enjoyed my time working for the SSTUWA this year, I am excited to apply the industrial and professional knowledge I have obtained into my work as a teacher and unionist.

“I look forward to putting this into practice at my branch and sharing my experiences with my broader networks.”

The inaugural Growth Team New Educator Internship has not only delivered strong recruitment outcomes and meaningful engagement strategies; it has also equipped two early career teachers with the skills, knowledge and confidence that will continue to benefit their schools, their colleagues and the union for years to come.




**Pictured: 2025 Growth Team New Educator Intern, Ellie Aldred.**



By Chloe Hosking
Growth Team coordinator

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