Discovery-enabling culture

University of Leicester Coaching and Mentoring Academy
Why have we created a coaching and mentoring academy?

One of the four key pillars of activity in the University’s Strategic Plan is a Discovery-enabling culture, which is described in the Plan as one that ‘actively supports all of our staff in fulfilling their potential, sharing their ideas and experiences and learning through leading’. This culture encourages creativity, measured risk-taking and collaboration.

When it comes to developing its leaders the University has decided that it needs a diversity of leadership talent so that it is sufficiently agile to meet the full range of its complex and ever-changing challenges. A rigid framework of leadership competencies and skills is too constraining. Instead we want to focus on nurturing individual strengths and respecting difference in leadership skills and styles.

Coaching and mentoring are ideal ways of bringing out the best in us all. Therefore, we are creating a University of Leicester coaching and mentoring academy. The academy will enable us to develop our capabilities so that we are equipped to coach and mentor one another confidently and effectively and have courageous conversations. It will also provide a central resource where we can access coaching and mentoring support when we need it.

What is coaching?

There are many different definitions of coaching. However, all definitions have common roots. Coaching assumes that the person seeking coaching (the ‘coachee’) has all the resources required to be able to solve his or her own issues. The job of the coach is to ask questions and to listen, guiding the coachee to draw on his or her resources and talents and to devise solutions for him or herself. Coaching is not about giving advice and your coach does not need to be an ‘expert’ in your area of work (in fact, it is often better if he or she is not an expert). Nor is it counselling, although occasionally personal issues may be considered when examining work-related ones (after all, the ‘whole person’ comes to work). But there are boundaries in coaching and all good coaches work within the limits of their knowledge and competence.

In the University of Leicester coaching and mentoring academy we will be focusing on work-related issues.

What is mentoring?

Mentoring shares a skills-set with coaching insofar as both rely on good questioning and listening skills. The difference is that a mentor usually has experience in an area of work or skills that the ‘mentee’ would like to know more about. Therefore, the mentor has something of the ‘expert’ about him or her. In mentoring, unlike in coaching, the mentor may give advice if asked. However, like coaching, mentoring must not be confused with counselling. Mentoring and coaching focus on the future and on enhancing performance while counselling examines how issues from the past may be holding us back.
**Who are our coaches?**

We plan to build a community of both qualified internally-trained coaches and qualified external coaches (as well as internal and external mentors and action learning set facilitators). This mix will optimise the balance between knowledge of the University (including its culture) and an outside perspective that challenges the way we do things. All our coaches will attend supervision sessions to ensure that they review their coaching practice. They will also attend events where they share best practice about coaching to ensure they offer the best possible service (however, they will never share personal information about their coachees).

**How do I train to become a qualified internally-trained coach?**

The University is supporting the development of 32 qualified internally-trained coaches in 2016/17.

Each trainee coach will study for the ‘industry-standard’ qualification, the ILM level 5 certificate in coaching and mentoring. The University will pay for the costs of training. In return each coach, post-qualification, will be asked to give back time to coaching their colleagues across the University. This will not be an onerous and time-heavy commitment. At this stage we anticipate that each qualified coach will have two coachees per year and that this will equate to around two hours of the coach’s time per month.

The 32 places are available on two cohorts of 16 places. If you would like to be considered for a place then please complete the form shown in Appendix A and return it to Lisa Hallam (lh214@le.ac.uk x 5333) by **Monday 13th February 2017** for Cohort 2. The dates of the mandatory workshops are shown on the form. You must be able to attend all of them and you must get the signed consent of your line manager or the person responsible for your development.

Please note, to obtain your ILM level 5 certificate you will have three assignments to write as well as attending all the workshops. You will also need to complete 12 hours of coaching practice during your six months’ training. So, there is a considerable time commitment here and you must be sure that you can meet the requirements and really want to do this before signing up.
Who will I coach during my training and when I’m qualified?

During your training we will find coachees for you to coach. They will bring their real-life issues to the coaching sessions but they will know that you are practising and learning.

After qualification, we will match you with coachees who submit business cases to the academy for coaching support. We will always check with you first that you are able to take on a new coachee.

Coachees will come from every part of the University. It is likely that you will be coaching someone from a different department and someone at a different grade or level of experience from you. Your grade is not important when you are coaching—your skills and confidence as a coach are what matters.

How do I learn how to coach more effectively in my day-to-day work?

You may not feel ready to qualify as a coach or you may not want to commit to the extent required. However, you may wish to enhance your coaching skills to help in your day-to-day work as a leader or fellow colleague. We plan to run short practical sessions on ‘how to coach’. If you would be interested in attending a session please contact Lisa Hallam (lh214@le.ac.uk x 5333).

How do I get coaching support from the academy?

If you would like to access coaching support from the academy we ask you to discuss this with your line manager or the person responsible for your development. Then you will need to complete the short business case (document shown in Appendix B) and send it to Lisa Hallam (lh214@le.ac.uk x 5333). This asks you to give an outline of your coaching need. Please rest assured that this remains confidential to the members of the Organisational Development team who are managing the academy. Your coach will see your business case only after you have had an informal meeting to see whether you feel you can work together. We do ask you to get the signature of your line manager or person responsible for your development before sending the form to Lisa to ensure that he or she supports the case and is happy for you to spend time being coached.

How do I become a mentor or get a mentor?

In 2017 we will be launching a mentoring database where each mentor will provide a short profile about him or herself and the areas in which he/she is especially skilled in mentoring. Anyone wishing to volunteer as a mentor should contact Lisa Hallam (lh214@le.ac.uk x 5333). Colleagues seeking a mentor will be asked to submit a short form outlining what they need from a mentor. Organisational Development will then match mentors and mentees. Further details will follow at the beginning of 2017.

In due course we hope to launch a self-service database for mentoring.
Besides general mentoring support we will also source mentors for particular schemes e.g. the Aurora Leadership Programme.

All mentors will receive training and on-going support.

**Key contacts**

Lisa Hallam, Organisational Development team assistant ([lh214@le.ac.uk](mailto:lh214@le.ac.uk) x 5333)

Dr Leigh Casey, Associate Director of Organisational Development ([lac51@le.ac.uk](mailto:lac51@le.ac.uk) x 7914)

Claire Nicholls, Organisational Development Consultant ([cmn18@le.ac.uk](mailto:cmn18@le.ac.uk) x 1827)
Appendix A

Application for a place on the University of Leicester Coaching and Mentoring Academy

Please return your completed form to Lisa Hallam (lh214@le.ac.uk x 5333) by Monday 13th February 2017 for cohort 2.

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Why do you want to become a qualified coach in the University of Leicester coaching and mentoring academy?
What skills do you think you will bring to your coaching work?
Before you submit your form please read the expectations we have of you if you accept a place on the coaching programme and be sure that you can commit to these expectations.

We expect you to:

- Attend all workshops in full (see relevant dates on next page).
- Contribute in your own way to all workshops, including taking part in practice exercises.
- Submit all assignments on time.
- Carry out all your coaching practice sessions as scheduled with you.
- Maintain confidentiality about issues told to you when you are coaching and on workshops.
- Give back an amount of time after you have qualified (which will be agreed with you) to coach colleagues around the University.
- Attend all supervision sessions and other development events after you have qualified.

Signature of participant agreeing to conditions above:

_______________________________________________

Signature of the person responsible for the development of participant:

_______________________________________________

Date:  __________________________________________
Dates of workshops

Cohort 1

Currently running until Thursday 9th March 2017.

*We expect all assignments to be submitted by Monday 15th May 2017.*

Cohort 2

*All workshop days will run 09.30-16.30 and will be held at the Leicester Learning Institute, 103-105 Princess Road East, Leicester LE1 7LG*

Monday 13th March and Tuesday 14th March 2017

Monday 8th May and Tuesday 9th May 2017

Monday 26th June and Tuesday 27th June 2017

We are running a half-day session on the morning of 20th March 2017, which will help you with writing your ILM assignments. This is optional but we would advise strongly that you attend.

*We expect all assignments to be submitted by Monday 4th September 2017.*
Appendix B

Application for support from the University of Leicester Coaching and Mentoring Academy-business case

Please return your completed form to Lisa Hallam ((lh214@le.ac.uk) x 5333).

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Please outline below the issue with which you need coaching support.
Why do you think coaching is the best solution for this need?
What are you prepared to do yourself to help address this issue?

Before you submit your form please read the expectations we have of you if we accept your business case and ensure you feel comfortable with them.

We expect you to:

- Meet the coach proposed to you to see whether you can work together productively.
- Attend all arranged coaching sessions promptly and participate in them fully.
- Do any work between sessions that you and your coach agree is helpful for your development.
- Take responsibility for your own learning.
- Give feedback to the coach as requested so that he/she can continue to develop.

Signature of participant agreeing to conditions above:

_______________________________________________

Signature of the person responsible for the development of participant:

_______________________________________________

Date:  ____________________________________________