

## Coaching and Mentoring

### 1. Introduction

1.1. Middlesex University supports the use of coaching and mentoring in order to develop the potential of all staff in supporting the aims and priorities of the University. Coaching and Mentoring are valuable learning and development tools, which should be developmental for both the coach/mentor and the learner. For the purpose of this policy:

- **coaching** is normally a short term intervention of approximately six sessions providing guidance and support designed to enhance effective performance in the current role. Coaching should be based around a specific task, responsibility or objective and provides a framework designed to assist the learner to explore options and raise self awareness in order to achieve a specific learning objective
- **mentoring** is more general guidance and support aimed at giving confidence and capability to meet current and future challenges and which complements other learning and development opportunities. Mentoring can be medium to long term in duration e.g. 6-18 months.

### 2. Scope

2.1. Whilst coaching and mentoring can be used in a number of ways to support development this policy focuses specifically on:

- Coaching to develop performance potential or to support the transfer of learning into the workplace
- mentoring for staff new to the University (induction mentoring)
- mentoring for managers and staff who take on a new role which is significantly different.
- Mentoring for academic staff completing the PGCertHE

### 3. Becoming a coach or mentor

3.1. Line managers are encouraged to develop and use coaching techniques and skills for members of their own teams as part of the normal development of their

staff. All Middlesex University leadership and management programmes will include development of coaching skills and techniques as appropriate. Specific courses will also be offered.

- 3.2. Coaches may be internal or external and will have appropriate management and coaching training and experience. Internal coaches who do not already have appropriate qualifications must attend an appropriate internal or external course. Active coaches are also expected to participate in co-supervision with another coach. The purpose of the supervision is to reflect on their coaching, continue their development as coaches, provide support in dealing with difficult situations and protection for the person being coached. Supervision will be overseen by Staff Development.
- 3.3. Mentors will usually be internal members of staff who share a disciplinary, professional or experiential background with their mentee and will have relevant job related experience, skills and knowledge. Where the responsibilities or level of the role is such that there is no internal person with the appropriate disciplinary, professional or experiential background an external mentor may be sought. Mentors will not be in a line management relationship and will not normally be from the same team or work with each other on a day to day basis (see also paragraph 5.6 concerning “buddying”). The mentoring relationship is voluntary on both sides and either party may terminate the relationship without the need for explanation. Mentors should prepare by:
  - Reading the “Guidance for Mentors”
  - Completing the e learning Mentoring course
  - Attending a Mentoring Workshop or a briefing from Staff Development
- 3.4. Being a mentor or internal coach should be developmental for the coach/ mentor and be recognised as part of the own development and their work programme and responsibilities

#### **4. Coaching**

- 4.1. Coaching as a development solution should be identified as part of the appraisal process through agreement between the line manager and member of staff. Often it will be appropriate for the line manager to use coaching skills and techniques as part of their normal responsibility for the development of staff. Occasionally it may be decided that the support of an independent coach is required. The learner and the manager should read and discuss the Coaching Overview before agreeing this as a development solution. Coaching, other than by the line manager, should not be used as part of a disciplinary process or to deal with under performance. The line manager should seek advice from Staff Development to identify an appropriate coach.
- 4.2. It is expected that there will be between 3 and 6 coaching meetings at suitable timescales (for example monthly). In some cases coaching may take place by telephone. The coach and learner will jointly agree initial goals for coaching. If appropriate these should also be discussed and agreed with the line manager. Line managers should ensure that the coaching is reviewed after three sessions and at the end using the Coaching Review form. If an external coach is used

copies of the review forms should be sent to Staff Development. Internal coaches will keep copies of review forms as part of their supervision process.

- 4.3. The content of coaching sessions will be confidential and information will only be disclosed to the line manager with the explicit agreement of the learner. However it is expected that the learner will discuss the learning outcomes with their line manager as part of regular one to one and appraisal discussions. It may also be appropriate for the coach to meet jointly with the line manager and learner.

## **5. Induction mentoring**

- 5.1. All new members of staff will be provided with a mentor for their first year of employment. Mentoring is part of and should enhance the induction process but mentors will have no involvement in the formal assessment of the probationary period nor will they report on the mentoring meetings to the line manager. In some circumstances the mentor may also undertake a teaching observation as part of probation; this is considered to be outside of the mentoring relationship.
- 5.2. The aim of mentoring is to provide general guidance and support to someone in a new role giving them the confidence and capability to meet current and future challenges. The role of the mentor is to provide information and share knowledge about the organisation, provide informal guidance, discuss relevant current issues and support and encourage the mentee. It is not the role of the mentor to teach someone how to do their job nor to take on any responsibilities that should fall to the line manager.
- 5.3. Line managers should discuss the choice of mentor with the rest of the appointment panel at the time of appointment and inform HRS. In cases where it is difficult to identify a suitable member of staff advice can be sought from Staff Development or the person responsible for the local (i.e. school/service) development plan.
- 5.4. It is the responsibility of the mentor to contact the mentee within two weeks of their starting date. The first meeting should take place within one month of the starting date. At the first meeting the mentor and mentee should complete a mentoring agreement. A minimum of two further meetings should take place during the first year. More regular and frequent meetings can be arranged if both think it is appropriate.
- 5.5. If either party wish to terminate the relationship before the minimum number of meetings has taken place they should inform the mentee's line manager. There is no need to provide any explanation, but complaints about the behaviour of the mentor should be followed up by the line manager. If the relationship is terminated or the mentor leaves the University before the minimum number of meetings has taken place a new mentor should be assigned by the line manager.
- 5.6. New starters sometimes also benefit from a "buddy" for the first two weeks. This is someone, often from the same work team who has the responsibility of helping a new person feel at ease in their new surroundings. A "buddy" may also

take some responsibility for teaching aspects of the job. A “buddy” and a mentor will not usually be the same person and it is possible for a new starter to have both. Further guidance on “Buddying” can be found in the “Staff Induction: Guidelines for Managers.”

## **6. Mentoring for those taking on new roles and responsibilities**

- 6.1. A mentor should be offered to all managers and other staff who take on or are promoted to a new role which is significantly different from the previous role. Where appropriate line managers should discuss the choice of mentor with the rest of the appointment panel at the time of appointment. For more senior staff and those in specialist areas it may be necessary to seek an external person who shares the appropriate professional or experiential background. Contacts through networks and professional organisations may help identify a suitable person. Staff Development can also provide advice.
- 6.2. Defining the mentoring relationship in these circumstances will be a matter of agreement between the mentor and mentee. It is recommended that they complete a mentoring agreement and use the Guidelines for Mentors.

## **7. Mentoring for academic staff completing the PG Cert HE**

- 7.1. Students may approach prospective mentors themselves or may seek guidance from the Learning and Teaching Strategy Leaders in their school. Students should provide the Programme Leader with the name of their mentor as soon as possible after starting the programme.
- 7.2. Mentors must prepare by reading the Guidelines for Mentors and must be given a copy of the programme handbook. Whilst not compulsory, all mentors are encouraged to attend a Mentoring Workshop.
- 7.3. It is expected that:
  - There will be a written agreement between the mentor and student that the mentor is able to give the necessary time and support
  - Meetings will take place once a month, lasting approximately 45 minutes to one hour for the duration of the programme
  - The mentor will carry out one of the formative teaching observations
  - The student keeps brief notes of the meeting e.g. topics discussed, details of action plans as these could be included in the portfolio of evidence documenting achievement of the relevant learning outcomes

### **Associated documents (available on the Intranet - Staff Development Portal)**

Mentoring Guidelines  
Mentoring Agreement  
Coaching Overview  
Initial Goals for Coaching

Coaching Review Form

**Associated Training**

Becoming a Coach  
Coaching Conversations  
Mentoring Workshop

**Related policies**

Staff Development	HRPS4
Probation	HRPS13
Teaching Observations	APS19

*This policy was adopted by Management Team at its meeting on 21 December 1992. It was reviewed in 1994/5 and 2001. This version was updated, through consultation with Executive Briefing Group, UCU and UNISON, in the academic year 2007-08 to include Coaching and was approved by Executive at its meeting on 12 June 2008. It is due for review in June 2013."*