



Supporting Professional Development through Coaching/Coaching /Mentoring

A Policy Document

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INTRODUCTION AND RATIONALE

Coaching/mentoring for the professional university; a timely renewal of a vital element

This document contains a series of papers relating to the implementation of a revised coaching/mentoring policy for the University of Bolton. The revision of this policy is timely as we continue to establish and interpret the ethos of our organisation as a *professional* university, where we would expect to see cultural change and, in line with a range of professional development initiatives, coaching/mentoring will be an effective catalyst for such change. It is imperative, therefore, that the coaching/mentoring policy moves in line with current thinking and has clarity of purpose. The rationale for defining coaching/mentoring as a vital element in the development of a professional university is set out below under a series of headings: supporting professional development for all; supporting learning communities and shared values and aspirations.

Supporting professional development for all

The field of education is increasingly complex, requiring the highest standards of professional practice from all members of staff. It could be argued that teaching and those who support teaching are in the *core profession* and are the key agents of change in today's knowledge society (Goodson and Hargreaves, 2003). Furthermore, the Higher Education Academy (HEA) in their Standards Framework (HEA, 2006) has identified professional values that are expected for teachers in Higher Education – and we would expect that these would extend to those who work in professional and supporting departments. They are:

- commitment to incorporating the process and outcomes of relevant research,
 - scholarship and/or professional practice
- commitment to development of learning communities
- commitment to continuing professional development and evaluation of practice

Coaching/mentoring, we would argue, is a vital mechanism for initiating, maintaining and reinforcing these commitments. This contention is forcefully supported by Clutterbuck, who maintains that the development of staff cannot be the sole responsibility of either the individual or their manager. Thus, coaching and mentoring:

‘ ... can work in most organisations, regardless of size, culture or market sector. It can communicate to employees far more fully the complexity of procedures and the unique nature of the company than any formal training course, induction booklets or company manual. [Coaching] mentoring enhances the abilities of both [coach] mentor and [coachee] mentee, so the organisation grows through increased efficiency. Companies with formal, longstanding [coaching] mentoring programmes claim tangible increases in productivity and efficiency. Intangible benefits include improved staff morale, greater career satisfaction and swifter getting up to speed when mentored managers are inserted into a job’ (2004, p.31)

Developing, maintaining, monitoring and evaluating a Coaching/mentoring programme will have substantial resource implications for the University. However, easier recruitment and induction, improved employee motivation, more effective management of corporate culture, succession planning, improved communications and staff retention are all noted benefits.

Since Coaching/mentoring has the capacity to support the needs of individuals by recognising their autonomy and unique qualities, a commitment by the University to a well-managed and appropriately resourced Coaching/mentoring programme is a tangible and fitting response to our espoused dedication to celebrate and nurture the diversity of talent within our own staff.

Achieving our strategic objectives through supporting learning communities

The Coaching/mentoring policy will be central to the development of a learning community. Furthermore, a well-supported and developed coaching and mentoring culture will be significant in achieving the following strategic objectives:

To develop our strength as a flexible and responsive university by providing varied models of delivering higher education beyond the standard three year full-time undergraduate degree and building upon our traditional strength as a provider of part-time, work-based, vocational and professional higher education geared to the needs of employers and people in work, delivered face to face and on-line.

To offer higher education opportunities to as diverse a community as possible by building upon our strong reputation for widening participation but radically enhancing the ways in which we reach out to students both full-time and part-time and with academic and practical qualifications (diplomas, apprenticeships, national vocational qualifications and strengthening the support we give them to progress and achieve.

To build on our core academic strengths in Creative Industries and Technologies (including Educational Technology), Built Environment, Engineering and Materials, Health and Wellbeing, Business and Management through investment in high quality teaching and applicable research which support new jobs, new industries and new professions.

The HEA have highlighted the importance of Coaching/mentoring in their Professional Standards Framework by giving professional recognition to those who are '[e]xperienced staff who have an established track record in promoting and mentoring colleagues in learning and teaching to enhance the student learning experience'. Furthermore the Association of University Administrators (AUA) has included 'coaching and mentoring others' as desired behaviour in two of their nine suggested *Professional Behaviours*. The University of Bolton, therefore, has an obligation to provide opportunities so that members of our own staff may be professionally recognised. Furthermore, as a professional university we would also wish to promote practices which strengthen and support our organisation as a learning community. One view of the professional university is that it is made up of a collection of smaller learning communities. In this scenario, Coaching/mentoring is seen as providing mutual support that will strengthen our identity and encourage the development of professionalism within and across these learning communities.

Goodson warns of 'corporate memory loss' which may happen if the 'chain of professional transmission is broken and layers of unquantifiable knowledge' remain uncommunicated to the next generation of staff (2005, p. 81). Coaches / mentors provide a vital role in ensuring that professional knowledge is transmitted. Furthermore, Coaching/mentoring provides a legitimate and recognised way of bringing individuals into a learning community. Coaching/mentoring strengthens participation as 'a way of learning – of both absorbing and being absorbed in – the 'culture of practice'' (Lave and Wenger 1991, p.95).

The University also sits within a greater community of higher education establishments with whom we exchange ideas and provide supportive mutual potency. The revised Coaching/mentoring policy recognises this need and promotes and facilitates this critical flow of professional knowledge and expertise.

Shared values and aspirations

Our notions of the culture of professionalism need to be shared and lived out in our day to day exchanges with one another in various arenas and situations. If we wish to ensure that all colleagues share the values and meanings of our professional identity, then Coaching/mentoring has been shown to be a useful and effective tool for reducing any ambiguity in interpretation of this ethos.

Drawing on Pfeffer (1981), Karl Weick (1995) emphasises the importance of reducing uncertainty in any organisation, pointing out that persuasiveness is greater when a well articulated point of view is

shared. Weick maintains that sharing a consistent world view which is articulated in a convincing fashion can help to benefit the organisation and we would argue that coaches / mentors, who work in a collective way, will be instrumental in bringing about this shared view.

Existing practices

The validation of the Postgraduate Certificate in Teaching and learning in HE has provided us with the opportunity to implement a mentor-review policy
(See <http://www.bolton.ac.uk/APDU/Documents/PGCTLHEMentorReview.pdf>)

This implementation has:

1. Established a group of mentor-reviewers who meet at regular intervals to explore practice and examine progress.
2. Given an initiative for the development of an on-line communication system for mentors through Moodle
3. Facilitated the positioning of an external examiner who comments on our mentoring approaches and practices in terms of the professional development of course participants
4. Facilitated the opportunity to revise mentor policy and practices through the PQEP system
5. Enabled the piloting of mentor induction and support through a lead mentor.
6. Initiated a culture of mentor-review as part of professional development for academic staff.

References

- Clutterbuck, D. (2004) (4th Ed.) *Everyone Needs a Mentor*, London: CIPD
- Goodson, I and Hargreaves, A. (2005) *Professional Knowledge, Professional Lives*, Maidenhead: Open University Press
- HEA available on-line at <http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/ProfessionalRecognition.htm> accessed on 22nd March 2007
- Lave, J. and Wenger, E. (1991) *Situated Learning: Legitimate, peripheral participation*, Cambridge; Cambridge University Press
- Weick, K.E. (1995) *Sensemaking in Organisations*, London: Sage Publications Limited

A VIEW OF COACHING/MENTORING: the Bolton perspective

Within the University of Bolton, there is general agreement that Coaching/mentoring should play a significant role in the induction and continuing professional development of all members of staff. The following section seeks to clarify our interpretation of Coaching/mentoring terminology and the approaches that will be adopted in the implementation of the policy.

The terminology

There are some conflicting and confusing interpretations and definitions in the terminology used in coaching and mentoring; 'contradictions abound' (Young et al 2005). Coaching and mentoring are terms that may have different functions and applications depending on the context in which they are being carried out. In particular, the terms coaching and mentoring are used to describe very similar functions in the professional services and in academic circles reflectively.

Rather than engage in a semantic debate, it is more important to focus on the procedures related to effective coaching and mentoring and to develop a shared sense of the positioning of this aspect of professional and academic development. For the sake of simplicity and understanding, the term used in this policy is coach / mentor; Coaching/mentoring and coachee / mentee.

Broadly speaking, the University considers that the Coaching/mentoring function is a support mechanism which is directed by the coachee/mentee. We argue that this is appropriate for developing professional individuals if they are to possess characteristics such as autonomy, responsibility, reflective and critical thinking and collegiality.

The University of Bolton view is that Coaching/mentoring sits within a continuum between directive and non-directive engagement and that coach / mentors may draw on any of the skills associated with helping functions in order to support their coachee/mentee. (See diagram 1) The revised Coaching/mentoring policy refers to three different types of coach / mentor or coach / mentor functions. These are *induction coach/mentor*, *professional development coach / mentor* and *collegial coach/ mentor*. The differences between these three Coaching/mentoring functions are expressed in the Coaching/mentoring policy. Coach/mentors will be provided with appropriate initial training and on-going support in order to facilitate the implementation of the policy.

At the induction stage, Coaching/mentoring can provide support and direction as well as helping to draw an individual into the cultural milieu. This process will be vital in providing the foundations for professional collegiality. Mentors will also encourage and support continuing professional development by engaging colleagues in critical thinking, commitment to action and shared values.

Clutterbuck, D. (2004) *Everyone Needs a Mentor*, London: CIPD

Hay, J. (1999) *Transformational Coaching/mentoring: creating developmental alliances for changing organizational cultures*, Watford: Sherwood

Meggison, D and Clutterbuck, D. (2006) *Techniques for Coaching and Coaching/mentoring*, Oxford: Elsevier Butterworth-Heinemann

Young, J.R., Bullough, R.V. Draper, R.J. Smith, L.K. and Erickson, L.B. (2005) *Novice teacher growth and personal models of mentoring: choosing compassion over enquiry*. *Mentoring and Tutoring: Partnerships in Learning*, Vol. 13, Issue 2 pp. 169-188

UNIVERSITY OF BOLTON COACHING/MENTORING POLICY

(REVISED SPRING 2007, SPRING 2010)

1 Introduction

The University ensures that all staff members are provided with the opportunity to engage in continuing professional development. To this end, we have in place a number of initiatives which include professional development planning, and organised staff development events which are, in turn, supported by routine staff management activities such as team meetings, progress reporting, progress monitoring and informal one to one sessions.

In order to realise our goal of developing and supporting all staff members, the provision of Coaching/mentoring will now be made available across the University in a series of planned developments. This initiative will be developed, supported and monitored by the Human Resource Development (HRD) group through a Coaching/mentoring Committee (CMG).

However, it is considered that there should be a requirement for Coaching/mentoring across the University as a formal part of induction and ongoing professional development as an integral strategy for meeting the proposed targets set out in the Strategic Plan 2010-2016, namely:

[To develop our strength as a flexible and responsive university](#) by providing varied models of delivering higher education beyond the standard three year full-time undergraduate degree...

[To offer higher education opportunities to as diverse a community as possible](#) by ... radically enhancing the ways in which we reach out to students both full-time and part-time ... and strengthening the support we give them to progress and achieve.

[To build on our core academic strengths](#) ... through investment in high quality teaching and applicable research which support new jobs, new industries and new professions.

Our vision of ourselves as a Professional University has a bearing on the way we develop this Coaching/mentoring initiative and will influence the way we view the role of coach / mentor and coachee/mentee. Definitions of Coaching/mentoring vary, depending on the purpose and context in which the Coaching/mentoring takes place. Nevertheless, it is useful; possibly fundamental, in light of our ideas of professionalism, to have agreed a definition of what we mean by Coaching/mentoring at the University of Bolton. At present, we define Coaching/mentoring in this way:

Coaching/mentoring is a professional relationship in which an appropriately experienced colleague supports and guides a less experienced colleague in order that they may achieve increased and sustainable effectiveness in their role.¹

2 Timescales

From September 2010

2.1 Deans of schools and Heads of professional services departments will incorporate provision for implantation of this policy in their three year plan.

¹ Adapted from University of York - Guidelines on mentoring (October 1999) and Rogers, J. Coaching Skills – a handbook Maidenhead: Open University Press

- 2.2 Each university department or academic school will appoint at least one lead coach/mentor (see below).
- 2.3 All staff who are new to the University or new-to-role within the University will have a designated coach/mentor. The former will be named an *induction coach/mentor*; the latter will be named a *professional development coach/mentor*. Where appropriate, members of staff may be encouraged to find a *collegial coach/mentor* from industry or another HEI.
- 2.4 The *induction coach/mentor* and *professional development coach/mentor* will normally be an experienced staff member from the University, who is not the line manager of the coachee/mentee.
- 2.5 Members of staff may have more than one *professional development coach/mentor*.
- 2.6 The *induction coach/mentor* will be selected, on behalf of the coachee/mentee, by the *lead coach/mentor*. The *professional development coach/mentor* will be selected in agreement with both coachee/mentee and the lead coach/mentor.
- 2.7 The role of the coach/mentor is to provide appropriate advice, guidance and support to enable coachees/mentees to complete their induction into their role at the University or to support professional development as identified by the coachee/mentee.
- 2.8 The induction Coaching/mentoring relationship should normally last no less than the designated probationary period for the post. Professional development coach/mentors will agree the timescale of their Coaching/mentoring relationship with their coachee/mentee at the outset and articulate this in a contract.
- 2.9 All those who undertake the Coaching/mentoring role will be provided with appropriate training and guidance.

From September 2010

2.10 A pilot scheme will be established within one or more selected departments or schools. This pilot will be managed, monitored and evaluated by the coach / mentor co-ordinator, who will provide a report to the Pro-Vice-Chancellor for consideration at appropriate committees.

3 Implementation, training and guidance

- 3.1 **Lead coach / mentors.** Up to ten lead coach / mentors will be appointed within the current structure. One to each academic school and identified professional departments. Lead coach/mentors will be given a time allowance to undertake their role. The role of the lead coach/mentor will be:
 - to act as a coach/mentor;
 - to work alongside the head of section, deans or designated principal lecturer to encourage and co-ordinate coaching/mentoring activities within the school;
 - to provide an annual report to the appropriate committee which evaluates coaching/mentoring activities within the school and across the University;
 - to meet with other lead coach / mentors at regular intervals to consider common issues and recommend action following evaluations;
 - to oversee contracts and monitor the progress of Coaching/mentoring pairs;
 - to ensure implementation of the policy, provide advice and guidance to other coach/mentors, monitor and evaluate Coaching/mentoring within their particular area;
 - to co-ordinate with other lead mentors to provide an holistic picture of coaching/mentoring across the University.
- 3.2 **Induction and Training.** All coach/mentors will be required to attend two half-day Coaching/mentoring awareness sessions. Coach/mentors will also be encouraged to undertake CPD in coaching/mentoring, and the University will provide opportunities for appropriate CPD. Coachees/mentees will be required to attend a half-day awareness-raising session. The University already has in place a series of coaching/mentoring qualifications at different levels and in a variety of formats. These provide awards in Continuing Professional Development and are available through short, half-day sessions; e-learning; a taught module and a summer school at masters level (HE7). Coaching/mentoring awards currently offered by the University will be reviewed and up-dated by January 2011.

3.3 **Guidance.** The university will provide written and on-line guidance for all coach/mentors and coachee/mentees

3.4 **Coach/mentor co-ordinator.** The University will appoint a coach/mentor co-ordinator who will be responsible for managing, monitoring and evaluating the policy and for training coach/mentors and coachee/mentees.

3.5 **Induction Coaching/mentoring**

The provision of an induction coach/mentor is one feature of the induction package for all new staff to the university. The functions of *induction Coaching/mentoring* are to support integration of new staff members into the university generally and into their specific job role and are:

- to enable the coachee/mentee to understand the functions, philosophy and purposes of the department or school in which the coachee/mentee is working
- to support the coachee/mentee in reaching effective and efficient performance in their role
- to support the coachee/mentee in gaining familiarity with the geography, organisational structure and ethos of the University
- to support the professional development of the coachee/mentee within their specific area of expertise

3.6 **Professional development mentor**

There are two roles for *professional development coach/mentors*; coach/mentors for those new to post and coach/mentors for on-going professional development. Unlike the *induction coach/mentor*, the outcomes or functions of these relationships are not pre-defined and will be articulated by the Coaching/mentoring pair at the first meeting in the Coaching/mentoring contract. (See appendix 1) We would expect that the aims of the Coaching/mentoring relationship would be established and recorded at an initial meeting, and that these outcomes will vary considerably. Aims may relate to, for example, managerial skills, tutorial or teaching issues, research, or time management. Timescales will also be established along with expected outcomes. The functions of *professional development Coaching/mentoring* are:

- to establish aims and timescales for the Coaching/mentoring relationship
- to build self-knowledge and critical, reflective thinking skills
- to support the coachee/mentee in reaching their set aims in an effective and efficient manner
- to develop a meaningful relationship which will, ultimately, help the coachee/mentee to undertake their role in the most effectively manner.

3.7 **Collegial coach/ mentor and co-coach/mentor**

The University encourages senior members of staff to acquire a *collegial* or external coach/mentor. It may be appropriate for the *collegial coach/mentor* to be a professional colleague from another HEI or from industry.

The University also supports the establishment of co-mentoring dyads, which will be facilitated and supported by the lead coach/mentor

References

Daresh, J.C. (2003) *Teachers Coaching/mentoring Teachers*, Thousand Oaks: Corwin Press, Inc.
Meggison, D. and Clutterbuck, D. (2004) *Techniques for Coaching and Coaching/mentoring*, Burlington: Elsevier Butterworth-Heinemann.

APPENDICES

COACHING/MENTORING CODE OF CONDUCT

Coaching/mentoring is a quasi-professional relationship. 'The role of the mentor can be defined in terms of a service relationship that one person, the mentor, has towards another person, the coachee/mentee: the mentor ...provides knowledge, wisdom and developmental support in the interests of the protégé' (Moberg and Velasquez, 2004 p. 99).

Both coach/mentors and coachee/mentees will abide by the following code of conduct² which identifies seven features of the relationship:

Beneficiality: The fundamental purpose of the relationship is to benefit the coachee/mentee. In order that this is achieved, the following must exist:

- the coach/mentor must be diligent in providing knowledge, wisdom and development support
- the coach/mentor must demonstrate appropriate skills in Coaching/mentoring (such as listening, organisational knowledge and patience)
- the mentor will have undertaken formal coach/mentor training
- the coachee/mentee will have undertaken formal training
- the coach/mentor has a duty to take the utmost care in the quality of advice being provided
- the coachee/mentee must show commitment to the process and prepare themselves appropriately for meetings
- coach/mentors and coachee/mentees will be provided with a handbook for practice

Avoidance of harm: The relationship should do no harm to the coachee or mentee. In order to achieve this:

- the coach/mentor and coachee/mentee have a duty to avoid manipulation, deceit
- the mentor must avoid oppressive behaviour
- coach/mentors and coachee/mentees must ensure that expectations are appropriate and agreed then fulfilled.
- there must be avoidance of negative effects due to gender differences

Autonomy: One of the purposes of Coaching/mentoring is to encourage independence. In order to achieve this:

- coach/mentors should engage in open disclosure of information
- with the exception of *induction Coaching/mentoring*, the University will avoid any notion of compulsory Coaching/mentoring
- the coach/mentor will avoid paternalistic relations with the coachee/mentee

Confidentiality: The importance of confidentiality is obvious. It is the key to trust, and trust is the core of the Coaching/mentoring relationship. Therefore:

- the coachee/mentee has a right to privacy in terms of meeting venues and agendas

² Based on: Moberg, D.J. and Velasquez (2004) *The Ethics of Coaching / mentoring* Business Ethics Quarterly; Volume 14, Issues 1. Available, Online at <http://www.itl.usyd.edu.au/community/moberg.pdf> (accessed on 12.02.07)

- there will be a requirement for the coach/mentor to provide clarity about circumstances where confidentiality may be inappropriate.

Fairness: Coachee/mentees need to be reassured that the relationship will be one that is fair and in their interests. Therefore:

- the organisation of coach/mentor and coachee/mentee pairs needs to be undertaken in an impartial manner
- coachee/mentees need fair access to alternative coach/mentors in the event that the relationship is unproductive.
- those responsible for organising coach/mentors to coachee/mentees need to be aware of sensitive issues such as social class, ethnicity, gender etc in their allocation procedures
- coach/mentors need to show restraint in any promotion of their coachee/mentee

Loyalty: The role of coach/mentor holds certain tensions in terms of loyalties. Therefore:

- coach/mentors should avoid any conflict of interest
- coach/mentors need to be aware of the tensions between their loyalty to the coachee/mentee and to their employer
- coach/mentors must have the opportunity to attend regular coach/mentor support groups
- both coach/mentor and coachee/mentee should demonstrate loyalty to the relationship and the process through attending meetings punctually and arriving with heart and mind prepared.

Concern: It is accepted that Coaching/mentoring implies a more emotional level of duty: Therefore:

- coach/mentors must ensure that their 'obligation of concern for the coachee/mentee does not relieve [them] of obligations to third parties and to the organisation' (p.111)

Preliminary or first meeting agreements: This should include:

- 1 The completion of the coaching/mentoring contract. One copy to each of the coaching/mentoring pair and one to the appropriate lead coach/mentor.
- 2 Discussion and agreement on:
 - the aims and purposes of the coaching/mentoring arrangement
 - the length of the relationship
 - the frequency of meetings
 - clarification of the coach/mentor role
 - clarification of the coachee/mentee role
 - the nature and boundaries of the relationship

The following general behaviours are advocated:

- there is respect for each other's time
- the focus is on coachee/mentee's goals not the coach/mentors
- there is a duty, for both coach/mentor and coachee/mentee, to follow through on commitments
- there is a duty, for both coach/mentor and coachee/mentee to be sensitive to cultural and other differences

You are advised against developing romantic relationships between coach/mentor or coachee/mentee



THE COACHING/MENTORING CONTRACT

Name of Coachee/mentee.....

Name of Coach/mentor.....

The above Coaching/mentoring partners agree to enter into a Coaching/mentoring relationship under the following conditions:

1 Code of Conduct

We agree to protect each other's privacy and abide by the code of conduct as specified by the University of Bolton

2 Telephone *(please delete if not applicable)*

The coach/mentor agrees to be contacted by telephone, at agreed times, between meetings on the following number(s).....

The coachee/mentee agrees to be contacted by telephone, at agreed times, between meetings on the following number(s).....

3 E-mail *(please delete if not applicable)*

The coach/mentor agrees to be contacted by e-mail between meetings at the following address.....

The coach/mentor agrees to be contacted by e-mail between meetings at the following address

4 Purpose

The aims of this Coaching/mentoring relationship are:

-
-
-
-

Drawn up in triplicate (copies to coach/mentor, coachee/mentee and lead coach/mentor)

Signature (coach/mentor)..... Date.....

Signature (coachee/mentee)..... Date.....