

## **Approaches to Mentoring, Peer-Partnership and Coaching in SEED**

## **The Differences between Mentoring, Peer-Partnership and Coaching**

Although mentoring, peer-partnership and coaching all share some key characteristics and skills, they are nonetheless quite different and it is important to be aware of the differences. There are many definitions of coaching, mentoring and peer-partnership, but drawing on the University of Manchester models and literature in the field (for example, Cordingley, 2004, CUREE, 2005, Clutterbuck, 1992, Carnell, MacDonald and Askew, 2006) this document aims to outline approaches to coaching, mentoring and peer-partnership in SEED.

### **Mentoring**

Mentoring is similar to coaching. There is general agreement that a mentor is a guide who helps someone to learn or develop faster than they might do alone. In the workplace, mentors are often formally designated as such by mutual agreement, and outside of an individual's line management chain. They usually have considerable experience and expertise in the individual's line of business. A mentoring relationship usually focuses on the future, career development, and broadening an individual's horizons, unlike coaching which tends to focus more on the here and now and solving immediate problems or issues.

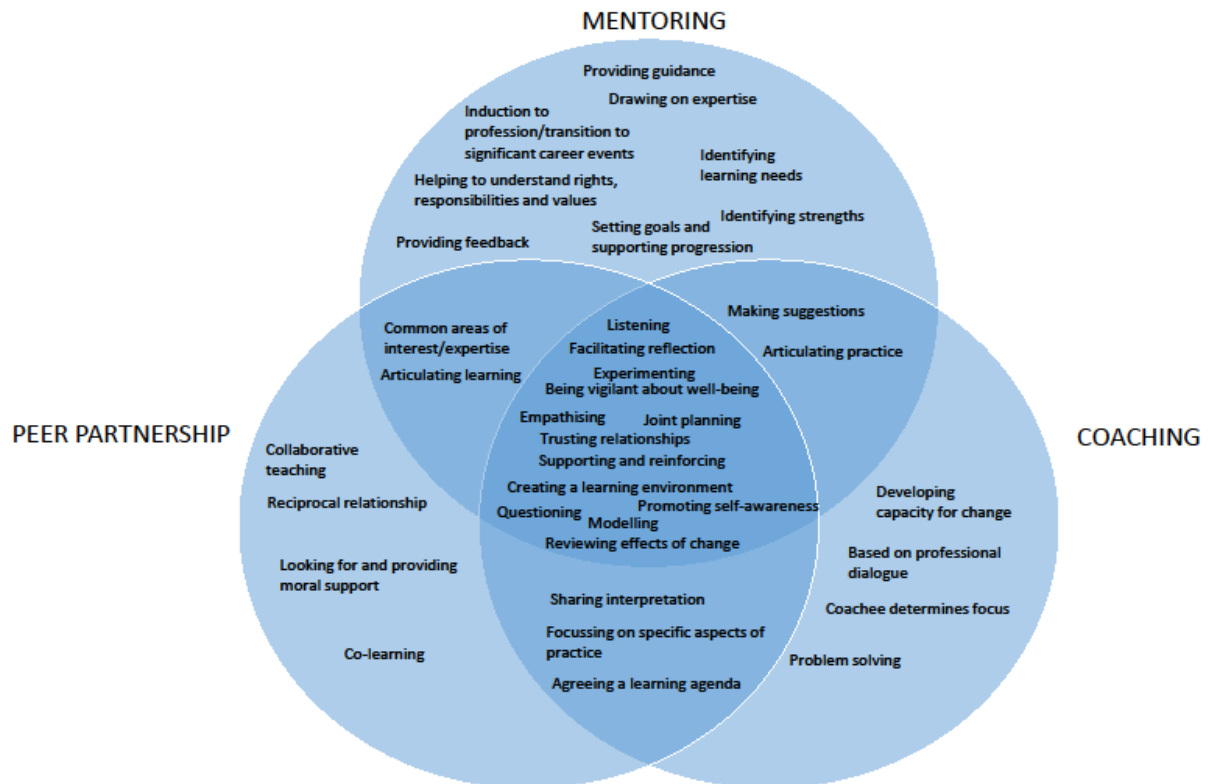
### **Peer-Partnership**

Peer partnership involves a reciprocal relationship whereby a peer is invited to eyewitness a partner's teaching and learning activities and to provide supportive and constructive feedback (Bell, 2005). Peer partnership is not meant to be merely an evaluative process and participants seek to reduce power imbalance often associated with formalised review. The principal goals are to inspire better teaching practice and enhance the value of teaching and learning success (Bell, 2005) where peers learn from each other.

### **Coaching**

Coaching involves the belief that the individual has the answers to their own problems within them. The coach is not a subject expert, but rather is focused on helping the individual to unlock their own potential. The focus is very much on the individual and what is inside their head. The key skill of coaching is asking the right questions to help the individual work through their own issues. Coaching is a way of giving people time to think. Getting out of how and more into the what and why, giving people the space to achieve great things - Swart, 2010. Coaching is not about teaching a person how to perform better in their role. It is about facilitating learning and development. This happens via confidential conversations with a trained coach in a structured way that benefits the coachee in relation to learning, thinking and identifying potential actions. Coaching should ultimately be seen as part of the way we work. It is involved with personal development, organisational development, business improvement, change management and performance and development review.

## Activities involved in Mentoring, Peer-Partnership and Coaching



Adapted from Carnell, MacDonald and Askew (2006)

## Mentoring in SEED

Mentoring is a development activity, which is firmly rooted in self-management enabling the mentee to:

- Foster self-reliance, self-confidence and a belief in their own potential
- Identify their own development needs and goals
- Write their own development plans
- Solve problems by analysing, reflecting and enhancing their self-awareness
- 

The role of a mentor is to support self-discovery and reflection and to provide space and time for the mentee to make their own decisions. This may mean taking the role of:

- Facilitator: Helping to set and achieve goals and opportunities
- Listener: Giving time and space and helping to problem solve
- Coach: Giving encouragement and feedback
- Networker: Helping to develop connections
- Role model: Examples to learn from
- Critical friend: Telling the truth, even if it hurts
- Change agent: Challenging the status quo
- Visionary: Being inspirational

In SEED, there are a number of ways in which mentees can access mentoring. There are both *informal* more *formal* approaches available.

**Informal mentoring** occurs throughout society, in the workplace, as well as in social, professional, and family activities. It occurs in a relationship between two people where one (mentee) gains insight, knowledge, wisdom, friendship, and support from the other (mentor). Either the mentee or the mentor may initiate the mentoring relationship.

### ***“Peer Pal” Mentoring as Defined by Shapiro et al. (1978)***

This form of mentoring occurs informally and with no specific interventions from the HE institution, department, or faculty. Individuals identify colleagues whom they believe would assist them in their academic endeavours.

### ***“Buddy” Mentoring***

Members of SEED Staff are allocated a mentor when they join the University. In practice this is a “buddy” system whereby a more experienced member of staff explains to a newly appointed staff the day-to-day practices and procedures of the department, rather than mentoring, which would also involve personal skills development.

**Formal mentoring** is developed and operated within organisations and is the most common choice for mentoring in the workplace. It involves mentors and mentees meeting up for frequent face-to-face mentoring sessions over a long period of time. Often, mentees have specific goals they are looking to achieve.

## ***Manchester Gold***

Manchester Gold is facilitated through the Staff Development Unit (SDU). The scheme aims to develop staff across the University by linking them to the support of a more experienced colleague. This colleague will act as their **career mentor** over a nine-month period.

The scheme is for any staff member working at the University who would like help with their **career development**. There are a number of benefits for both mentees and mentors in this relationship.

<https://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/staff-learning-and-development/academicandresearch/personal-skills-and-development/mentoring/manchester-gold/>

## ***SEED 'Teaching and Learning' Micro-Mentoring***

SEED offers the opportunity for mentees to access mentoring to support the development of **quality first, inclusive teaching**. Mentors undertake this role for a **short period of time** to support the development of mentees. Knowing that a relationship has a specific endpoint can often inspire a mentor and mentee to be more efficient at solving the mentee's challenges. Short-term "micro-mentorships," which are built around reaching clearly defined, actionable goals, such as learning specific skills or solving specific challenges can therefore be very helpful

The SEED Associate Director facilitates the programme. Requests for mentoring are considered on an individual basis. The AD will try to match mentor and mentee, although this is dependent on availability of resources and individual coach workloads.

To request mentoring, please email [Peter.duncan@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:Peter.duncan@manchester.ac.uk).

Once your request for mentoring has been received, the SEED AD will provisionally allocate you a mentor, who will then contact you to set up an introductory first meeting to discuss your mentoring needs and how subsequently to proceed.

There are a number of benefits for both mentees and mentors in this relationship.

(See appendices for further information)

## ***Mid-Career Mentoring Programme***

The aim of the programme is to provide **career support** to colleagues as they develop into senior internationally leading scholars. The programme will be led and co-ordinated by Tim Allott, Professor of Physical Geography and past Head of School.

The programme is aimed at mid-career staff across the School who think they might benefit from bespoke mentoring and training around academic career management and planning. It is likely to be most appropriate for colleagues in the 3-4 years after probation but is open to all non-probationary staff. Each cohort of staff on the programme will be mixed across departments so that networking across the School is an important part of the programme.

The programme lasts for two years. It will include one full afternoon per year, around six lunchtime sessions per year and four mentoring meetings per year. Total time commitment is likely to be around an hour a month over the two years.

## ***Probation Mentoring***

Through HNAP, this mentoring approach is specifically designed to support a new academic member of staff through their formal employment probation period

## **Peer-Partnership in SEED**

SEED offers the opportunity for staff to access peer-partnership to support the development of quality first, inclusive teaching. Peer-Partnership in SEED is based on the principles of Lesson Study, whereby trios collaboratively plan and deliver sessions to students. This is a voluntary scheme involving a reciprocal relationship between peers.

The SEED Associate Director facilitates the programme. Requests for peer-partnership are considered on an individual basis. The AD will try to match peers, although this is dependent on availability of resources and individual workloads.

To request peer-partnership, please email [Andrew.fryers@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:Andrew.fryers@manchester.ac.uk).

Once your request for mentoring has been received, the SEED AD will provisionally allocate you a mentor, who will then contact you to set up an introductory first meeting to discuss your mentoring needs and how subsequently to proceed.

## **Coaching**

The SDU facilitates opportunities for staff to access individual coaching. Requests for coaching are considered on an individual basis. The SDU will try to match coach and coachee, although this is dependent on availability of resources and individual coach workloads.

To request coaching, please visit: <https://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/staff-learning-and-development/academicandresearch/personal-skills-and-development/coaching/>

Once your request for coaching has been received, Staff Learning and Development will provisionally allocate you a trained coach, discuss your request to access the services of an external coach or refer you to a specialist coaching service for staff with disabilities. The allocated coach will then contact you to set up an introductory first meeting to discuss: how coaching works, your coaching needs and how subsequently to proceed.

The Staff Learning and Development also has an online self-coaching tool called Mindset. This a self-coaching tool that aims to develop self-awareness and support you in self-coaching. Based upon a self-assessment questionnaire you will receive a series of micro coaching exercises where you are encouraged to make commitments to do things differently by setting goals, objectives and forming new habits.

The following principles govern the operation of Staff Learning and Development coordinated coaching services:

- Where staff take part in one to one coaching there are no formal reporting lines back to that individual's line manager unless three way contracting has been agreed by all parties. The coach will be bound by a confidentiality rule - we would however expect that staff discuss their need for coaching with their line manager prior to making an application;

- Individuals taking part in one to one coaching do so as part of their own personal and professional development – participation in one to one coaching does not imply any performance deficiencies or any remedial need for an individual;
- Taking part in one to one coaching will be recorded on an individual's University training record unless an individual specifically requests otherwise;
- The effectiveness of one to one coaching will be evaluated in similar ways to other staff development activities consistent with maintaining confidentiality.

## Appendix 1

### SEED Micro-Mentoring Agreement

We are undertaking a voluntary micro-mentoring relationship for our mutual benefit. To ensure clarity, and to maximise the likelihood of a successful outcome, we have agreed the following terms for this relationship.

**Confidentiality Note. We will honour personal and professional confidences, and at all times seek to maintain a relationship built on mutual trust, respect, and confidentiality.**

Duration of relationship (typically no longer than 6 weeks)

Frequency of meetings

Duration of meetings

#### Contact Information

Mentee name

Email

Phone number

Preferred method and time of contact

Mentor Name

Email

Phone number (optional)

Preferred method and time of contact



**Mentee's Objectives**

**Progress Review Point 1**  
**Date:**

**Progress Review 2**  
**Point Date:**

### Micro-Mentoring Plan

Development Area	Activity	Success criteria	Impact	Further Development

**Mentee Signature**

**Mentor Signature**

**Date**

## **Appendix 2**

### **The role of the mentor**

- Introduce yourself to the mentee as soon as possible after accepting the role and set the date for the first meeting.
- Encourage the mentee to think about what they want from the process.
- Clarify that the process is about ensuring that their needs are the focus and your role is to support them in achieving their aims.
- Stress that confidentiality is of utmost importance.
- honour the meetings arranged and be on time; or reschedule in a timely manner
- Complete the micro-mentoring agreement with the mentee (see appendix 1)
- Be clear about the boundaries of the relationship (see appendix 4)
- At the start of each meeting ensure that the mentee's agenda has been clarified. For example, a session could start with the question 'What do you want from the meeting today?'
- Keep to the start and finishing times of meetings
- Build in a review point or 2
- The ending needs to be very clear explicit and appropriate and a discussion of what, if anything, might replace the relationship needs to be discussed.

(adapted from Kay and Hinds, 2005)

## **Appendix 3**

### **The Role of the Mentee**

The role of the mentee is to ensure that their professional needs are being met in the meetings. They should think about what they need from the meetings and make this clear to the mentor. They need to:

- take responsibility for their learning
- consider and articulate their agenda for each meeting
- make it clear how the sessions are meeting their needs and whether the approach taken by the mentor is appropriate.
- complete the micro-mentoring agreement with the mentee (see appendix 1)
- take a note of any action that has been decided
- be as honest as they can about how they understand the issues being discussed and their responsibility to it
- honour the meetings arranged and be on time; or reschedule in a timely manner
- be clear about the boundaries of the relationship: keep a professional distance (see appendix 4)
- regard all conversations as confidential
- be realistic and not expect the mentor to solve their problems

(Adapted from from Kay and Hinds, 2005)

## Appendix 4

### What micro-mentoring is...

- Mentoring is a positive developmental partnership, which is driven primarily by the mentee. It offers a **reflective space** where the mentee can take responsibility for and discuss their development
- Its primary aim is to **build capability and self-reliance** in the Mentee
- Mentors can help **highlight issues** and to assist the Mentee in **planning** ways through them
- They can help **clarify the Mentee's perspective** while bringing an additional **impartial view** to bear on the issues
- Sometimes, when the issues are straightforward and urgent, a Mentor might offer advice or give some direction
- **Confidentiality, trust, understanding and positive expectation** are key to a successful partnership

### It is not....

- For dealing with underperforming individuals
- Taking on the problems or work of the Mentee – a Mentor should not find themselves doing things outside the mentoring sessions for a mentee
- Promoting/sponsoring/protecting the mentee
- Intended to deal with personal issues
- Therapy
- An opportunity for people to moan!
- The role of the Mentor to interfere with Mentee's day to day activities or objectives