

# LUBS Postgraduate Student Buddy Programme

## Handbook 2021-22

World Ranked – Triple Accredited – Award Winning



## Aims

The Student Buddy Programme aims to promote friendship and peer support, and to foster a greater sense of belonging and a more inclusive community across our postgraduate degree programmes.

## What is a Student Buddy?

A good buddy is someone who is:

- Approachable and supportive
- Proactive about their own development
- Able to share experiences
- Self-aware, non-judgmental and objective

Buddying is a relationship built on trust, openness, honesty and mutual respect. Think about the type of person with whom you would feel comfortable expressing your challenges, worries and ideas to.

An effective buddy will:

- Build rapport and create a safe space for you to share the issues and challenges you are facing
- Explore the purpose of the relationship and what you want to achieve
- Explore activities and options that will help to move you forward

## How to get the most out of the buddy relationship

Buddying is a two-way process. This means that both of you will have to work at making the relationship a success. Here are a few things that you can do and be to help you get the most out of buddying:

1. Be motivated and willing to commit the time and effort to the relationship
2. Be clear on the purpose of buddying and what you need from the relationship
3. Able to openly acknowledge and discuss areas for development
4. Be receptive to feedback, new ideas and approaches
5. Willing to share your experiences, insights and learning

## What you can bring to the buddy relationship

It is useful to think about what you can bring to the relationship, your motivation and how you learn best. Looking back on your experiences will help in your role as a buddy.

Spend a few minutes answering the following questions:

1. What can you draw on that will help you to prepare for your role as a buddy? For example being supported by others, receiving feedback, giving advice ...
2. What have you learnt from the above experiences that will help you prepare for buddying?
3. What areas would you like to develop, know more about, get better at?
4. How will the relationship help to provide development and learning opportunities?
5. What are you expecting from your buddy?
6. What can you do to enable your buddy to support you?
7. What makes a successful buddying relationship?
8. What do you think the buddy will gain from the relationship?
9. What difficulties and constraints do you feel there will be on the relationship and how can these be resolved?

## Things to agree on before you meet

Before you meet your buddy, try and get some background information as it will help to break the ice. The first meeting is where you find out as much as you can about each other.

1. **Purpose of the relationship** – explore perceptions, expectations, what you both hope to achieve from it
2. **Goals and objectives** - explore areas that you would like help with. What areas would you like to develop, be better at, know more about
3. **Confidentiality** - conversations should remain confidential between both parties. However, both parties need to agree that if either buddy feels that any information discussed will cause serious harm to their buddy or others, that this information is shared with the LUBS Student Support Team or Personal Tutor.
4. **Creating a safe space** – Create a space where you can talk openly and freely without being judged or criticised and is able to challenge and question without fearing any reprisal. Explore how you would be honest with each other – what needs to happen to facilitate this?

## 5. Meetings:

- How often you will meet?
- How long your meetings will last? Ensure that you can both commit to the time.
- How will you meet?
- How you will communicate in between meetings? Agree on format and frequency and limit the time of contact between meetings and make an agreement that suits you both and supports the relationship.
- Cancellation – agree on what to do if one of you has to cancel a meeting.

## Signs that a buddy relationship is in trouble

Signs that a relationship is in trouble include:

- Lack of commitment or time from either party
- Meetings are frequently cancelled or postponed
- Unrealistic expectations
- Clash of personality - over differences in communication or work style
- There is no enthusiasm for the relationship
- Trust has not developed and confidences are not shared
- Benefits of the relationship cannot be articulated by either party

Buddying is a voluntary relationship, which may be terminated at any time by the buddies. It is useful to agree at the beginning that if either partner for any reason wants to end the relationship, he / she is able to do so without blame or recriminations.

## Contact us

If you have any questions, please contact the Student Buddy Programme student support lead:

Samantha Gent

[S.I.Gent@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:S.I.Gent@leeds.ac.uk)