



Induction Buddy Scheme

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An exciting addition to Staff Induction Scheme at Loughborough University is the introduction of a designated Induction Buddy for a minimum of the first 6 months of every new starters' employment.

Definition of Buddying

Buddying is a knowledge-sharing method in which a peer, usually of a similar role or level of responsibility, is assigned as a first point of contact for a short period of time to provide advice and support and ensure a smooth transition.

Principles of the Loughborough Induction Buddy Scheme

- A buddy will be assigned by the line manager to a new starter, using the guidance available
- The buddy will be identified prior to the start date
- The buddy will have the option to join the Induction Buddy Network and attend the bi-monthly, hour-long forums
- The buddy will have support from the line manager
- The buddy will have time booked in the Induction Schedule to meet the new starter on their first day
- The buddy will maintain a formal buddying relationship for a minimum of 6 months and up to a year
- The buddy will have flexibility around the frequency of contact, method of contact, such as face-to-face 1-1s, MS Teams meetings, email or phone etc
- The buddy will not act as a line manager, in such as they are not expected to allocate tasks, set objectives, lead PDR reviews or lead on policies such as disciplinary or grievance
- Both the buddy and the new starter have the option to terminate the relationship with agreement of the line manager. If this occurs in the first 6 months a replacement buddy will be allocated
- If a buddy is no longer able to fulfil the buddying relationship within the first 6 months, a replacement buddy will be allocated

Benefits of a buddying scheme for New Starters

Buddying is a key element in ensuring induction is a successful and positive experience. The new starter has informal support and guidance from a friendly and easily approachable person, from their first day and throughout their induction. Having an assigned buddy will help new starters to settle into their role and the University more quickly and effectively. It will help prevent possible feelings of isolation or feeling unsupported. There will be an opportunity to ask questions, seek explanations and understand the culture more effectively.

Buddying is a mutually beneficial relationship. The buddy also develops and benefits from this relationship by supporting others, share their knowledge and experience, developing communications skills, taking on a role of responsibility and expanding networks.

The Buddying Role

The buddy will be expected to provide informal support and guidance to a new member of staff, which may include, but not necessarily be restricted to:

- being available to provide information and guidance in a friendly, supportive, confidential and non-judgemental manner.
- accompanying the new member of staff for lunch on their first day
- provide a campus tour for the new starter
- facilitating networking, by introducing the new member of staff to other colleagues around the School or Department, or by being able to answer the question “who was that?”
- introducing new staff to the culture of Loughborough University, by answering the question ‘what’s it really like around here?’
- answering day to day questions, that may not necessarily be about that individual’s job role.
- providing/arranging tours of the office, the School/department and the wider campus
- showing the new starter the non-academic facilities on campus, such as eateries, shops, sports facilities, banks and the pharmacy

The role of the buddy does not include:

- recruiting the individual
- planning and implementing the new starter’s induction
- answering questions about contracts of employment or other HR issues
- allocating work tasks, setting performance objectives or leading probation review meetings
- allocating training and development for the new starter

These activities remain the responsibility of the new starter’s Line Manager/Probation Adviser.

Who should be the buddy?

The buddy should be someone who will actively and positively engage with the role. They should have some level of experience of the University and preferably be from the same area of their School or Department. Ideally, they would be a peer and have some experience of or familiarity with the new starter's role. The line manager should trust the individual to be a buddy in the spirit of the culture of Loughborough University. The buddy should not be the new starter's line manager.

Points to consider:

- The buddy should be consulted prior to being given the task
- The buddy should have capacity to be able to support the new starter
- The buddy should understand all elements of the role
- The buddy should be aware of the online resources
- The buddying role can be a PDR Development Objective
- The buddy should know who to direct the new starter to regarding issues out of their remit, such as counselling, Occupational Health and the EAP scheme