

Examples of Coaching & Mentoring Initiatives

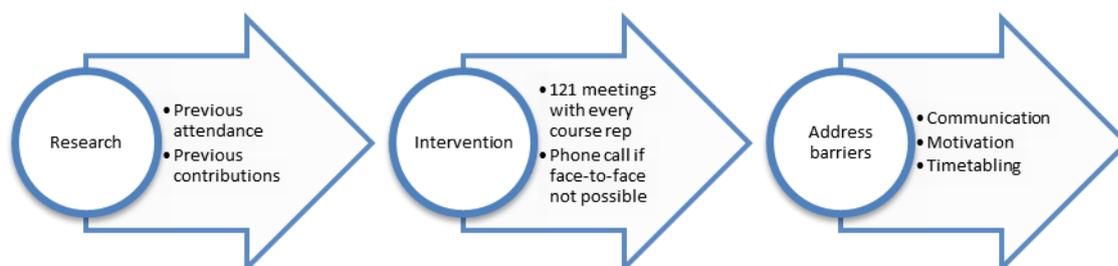
Introduction

This document contains three examples of different approaches to coaching and mentoring initiatives, addressing some of the challenges to keep learner representatives engaged and to help them feel confident in their new role.

Research Participation & Targeted Support: City College Plymouth

A challenge for the Students' Union and Student Support Team is to support equal and effective participation from all reps, across all academic areas, at Student Council meetings or Student Conferences. Engagement and active involvement can vary greatly - sometimes reps have not prepared for, or understand the issues discussed at a meeting, some do not routinely consult with their peers, and sometimes they simply do not attend.

What do they do?

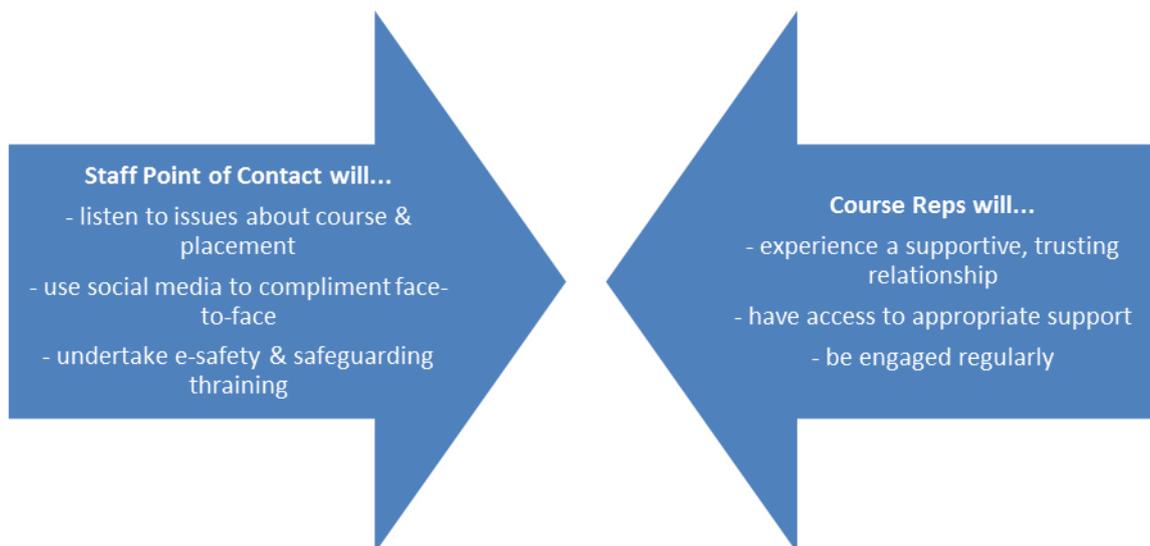


The Student Support Team also organise afternoons of free activities and refreshments as a reward for participating. This doubles as another, more informal, opportunity to talk with reps and again through coaching and mentoring, encourage and support their attendance at upcoming events.

There are a number of reasons why learner reps disengage, or cannot participate fully throughout the year. It is important to understand these barriers and address them. Offering personal support and coaching is a great way to re-motivate learners as well as having a means of identifying some of the barriers to engagement.

Staff Support: GHQ Training

Learner voice at GHQ Training is based on relationships; from responding to an initial advert to the first interview, through to engagement on a placement, all apprentices have a member of the team that acts as their main point of contact.



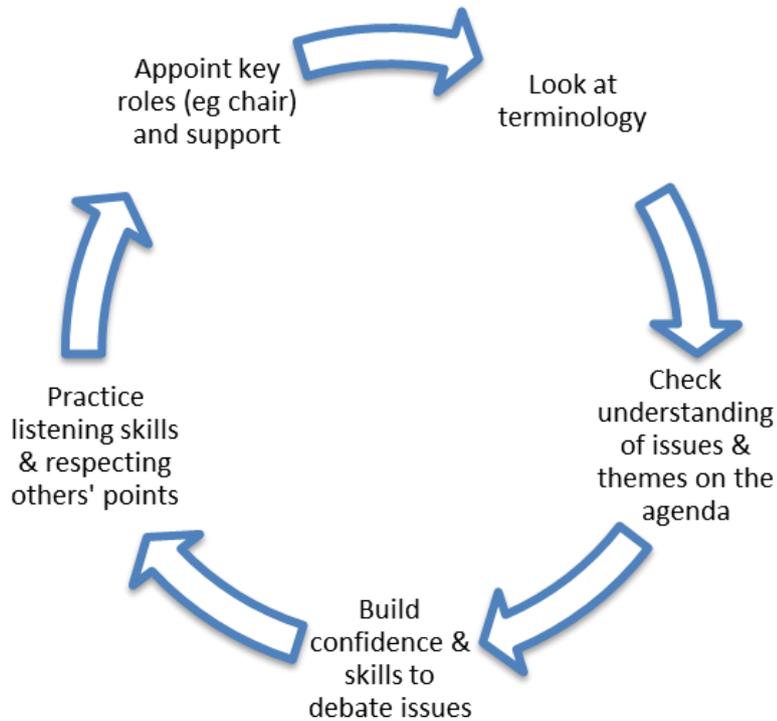
Establishing supportive relationships and fostering trust between staff and learners is key to generating an environment where learners feel able to share their learning journey.

Also, acknowledging where students are, and offering an accessible relationship, whether person to person or virtual, widens the opportunities for learners to remain engaged and involved throughout their course.

Pre-Meetings: Freeman College

To improve on the level of active participation and learner-led contributions at student council meetings, the group meets for one hour in the afternoon before each half-termly council meeting.

At this meeting they:



A booklet about what the Students' Council does and how learners can get involved is produced and distributed to all learners. It also addresses some of the jargon that accompanies some of the engagement processes, such as elections, to breakdown the potential barriers to participation.

Language and assumed understanding cannot be overlooked. Providing a safe environment where learners can prepare for an upcoming meeting ensures everyone can meaningfully participate and engage in formal, democratic decision making.