

Group Coaching: An Innovative Way to Grow Career Confidence

Emma Hill and Emma Anderson, Career Development Consultants, Student Futures

WHY GROUP COACHING?

- Student Futures piloted a group coaching programme with MBA students in 2023.
- As a result of the positive feedback received, the 'Grow your Career Confidence' programme for PGR Researchers was developed and implemented in collaboration with the Researcher Developer Team.
- Group coaching can lead to "...enhanced self-awareness, self-confidence and support."¹

OUR AIMS FOR THE PROGRAMME

- Develop participant's career confidence
- Build a community and network of support
- Encourage action planning and goal setting

HOW DID WE DELIVER THE 'GROW YOUR CAREER CONFIDENCE' PROGRAMME?



- Collaborated with the Researcher Developer Team to advertise the programme and recruit participants.



- Facilitators researched approaches to group coaching in preparation of sessions.^{2,3}



- Delivered six group coaching sessions (90 minutes each) over 12 weeks between Feb and April 2024 in the Active Learning Space at Craiglockhart Campus.



- Participants ranged from 1st year to final year PhD students. 15 students signed up to the programme with 6 - 8 regularly attending.
- Participants discussed and agreed objectives, themes and topics for discussion.



- After each session, additional resources related to the topics discussed were sent to participants.

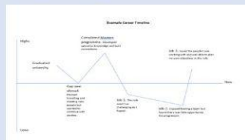


- Lunch was provided at the first session and refreshments at subsequent sessions.

WHAT THEMES WERE DISCUSSED?



EXAMPLES OF THE COACHING TOOLS AND ACTIVITIES USED.



Career timeline



Dialog cards

OUTCOMES



WHAT DID WE LEARN?

Collaboration

- Working with the Researcher Developer Team ensured effective sharing of information with PhD Researchers about the programme and details on how to sign up.

Contracting and re-contracting

- It is good practice to revisit and review the group coaching agreement throughout the programme.
- It may be necessary to discuss and agree how the group wish to proceed if sensitive topics arise in the sessions.

Having a common theme

- A common theme between the participants aided in encouraging discussion and sharing of ideas.

Preparation and flexibility

- Coming prepared with coaching tools and resources provided participants with opportunities to reflect and discuss.
- Each session was loosely planned but allowed for flexibility and the option for the group to change the topic of discussion.

Timing and resources

- Where possible, schedule group coaching to avoid school holidays to support attendance.
- Group coaching can be time and resource intensive and is not necessarily a resource saving exercise.

WHAT'S NEXT?

- Explore opportunities to introduce Group Coaching across other Schools and Programmes.
- Continue to collaborate with Researcher Development Team to review progress and participant's survey results.
- Develop group coaching packs and materials for Careers and Skills Development team.
- Continue to enhance practice and share best practice with peers and professional networks.