

14-19 education and skills

Support for leaders

Improving choice, improving chances

Coaching and action learning



Coaching for individuals and teams is a major part of our support programme for people in 14-19 partnerships. Coaching and action learning support the development of **collaborative leaders** and **inclusive teams**.

The CEL-NCSL coaching programme offer is tailored to meet the individual and organisational needs within 14-19 consortia of education and training providers. It is designed to offer **strategic support** to leaders and managers at all levels in the delivery of the new diplomas through collaborative leadership.

CEL and NCSL research shows that developing a shared partnership vision, as well as **practical action** and **results**, are important to ensure success.

What is coaching?

Coaching is a collaborative process which enables **individuals, teams and organisations** to develop by:

- reflecting on what they want and are trying to achieve
- identifying performance and leadership goals
- identifying barriers and challenges
- problem-solving difficulties and gaining clarity
- using the learning to take action, achieve goals, create change and continue to learn.

As part of this **change process**, participants come to understand themselves, their relationships, teams and organisations more fully.

Coaching works on the belief that the key to effective collaborative leadership and partnership working is aligning organisational goals with personal goals. The coach acts as a sounding board to facilitate change and practical action.

Background

As part of the government's strategy to support the implementation of 14-19 reform in every area, the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) commissioned CEL and NCSL to work in partnership to create and implement programmes aimed at supporting leaders and managers.

Focusing on the findings from the 14-19 pathfinder pilots and the results from these evaluations, NCSL and CEL have designed 12 flexible programmes to meet the needs of 14-19 consortia. Partners of these consortia can choose from a number of flexible and fully funded options to support and develop their work in relation to 14-19 reform.

Working together to deliver the
14-19 education and skills programme



National College for
School Leadership





The 14-19 coaching programme offer

What is action learning?

Action learning is an approach to learning for managers to work on real issues, and uses the experience and knowledge of each individual, with skilled questioning, to help create new knowledge and action.

This facilitated process can take place with a group of between six and eight individuals, who meet regularly to focus on specific projects and challenges. The group shares experiences, generates ideas and creates solutions through reflection, learning and action.

Coaching and action learning work well when:

- the individual or team is committed to and responsible for trying to change
- the organisation or partnership is committed to promoting and supporting change.

Our offer of support through coaching and action learning

The 14-19 coaching programme offer can be tailored to meet the needs of individual consortia through one or more of the following options:

- **One-to-one face-to-face coaching** for individuals, consisting of six one-to-one coaching sessions.
- **One-to-one tele-coaching** for individuals, consisting of an initial face-to-face coaching session, followed by five one-to-one sessions over the phone.
- **Facilitated action learning**, with up to six face-to-face sessions for a small group of individuals.
- **Team coaching** for a team drawn from across a partnership or organisation wishing to gain an insight into each other's perspectives to create a common vision, set of goals, and ways forward for the team, and the individuals in that team, and benefit the 14-19 partnership.

Why choose this programme?

The coaching process is a coactive partnership which reflects how leaders learn; as such, coaching is a powerful means of enabling change at individual, team, organisation and systems level.

Participants are encouraged to:

- become critically aware
- challenge existing ways of doing things
- aim for goals and outcomes that previously seemed unattainable.

The needs of individuals and the consortium will be assessed collaboratively with CEL and NCSL, and coaches matched according to need and geography. We will consult with your consortium and create a **bespoke programme** to support your development plans.

Consortia, teams and individuals will have an opportunity to help review and evaluate the impact and outcomes of the coaching programme.

What are the benefits?

The programme will give leaders and managers working to deliver the 14-19 reforms the chance to:

- focus on key priorities and issues
- generate ideas and actions to overcome these
- increase coactive and collaborative working
- increase mutual respect and understanding
- generate genuine partnering help and support
- **build partnerships around shared vision and values to benefit local learners.**

In addition, this programme will:

- help make 14-19 partnerships more collaborative and effective – able to deal with complex reforms
- contribute to collaborative leadership development
- assist decision-making and goal-setting processes
- bring new perspectives and experiences
- open up ideas, insights and ways forward in a complex, fast-moving change environment
- build learning communities of leaders at all levels
- **open up the process of dialogue and help to build relationships.**

Coaching support for 14-19 consortia

Coaching and action learning can enable leaders in schools, colleges, work-based learning providers and employers to develop the ability to engage, empower and motivate, grounding them in greater self-knowledge and understanding of others.

Who is it for?

The 14-19 coaching programme is for people working within or across a 14-19 consortium: **leaders, managers and coordinators** working at a strategic or operational level and responsible for strategic **vision, implementation and impact**.

Through focusing on particular consortia with topics or issues related to collaborative leadership and delivering the diplomas, the coaching programme will help to support growth, change and action in:

- whole strategic partnerships
- whole consortia
- individual organisations
- teams (existing or new)
- individuals within organisations.

Your sponsor

In order to maximise the impact and success of this programme, we ask that you nominate:

- a lead individual for the 14-19 consortium who will act as the senior management sponsor
- from each participating organisation, a manager who is committed to supporting the programme and will help to communicate with participants.

This sponsor will act as the **central point for communication and coordination**, and help assess the state of readiness for collaboration and coaching, nominating individuals and teams, monitoring and maximising the impact of the programme on change management.

The sponsor will explore and agree options and ensure that the programme is planned in a strategic and coherent way to address the specific needs of the 14-19 consortium.

It is **likely that the sponsor will have a strategic role** across the 14-19 consortium or the organisation: for example, a 14-19 consortium manager, adviser, coordinator, partnership manager or senior leader.

The initial orientation phase

This stage of the process is designed to help each partnership, consortium, organisation and individual gain a clear understanding of the 14-19 coaching programme offer and the benefits.

There may be **conversations** between the sponsor and a consultant from the programme, and **facilitated discussions** with the coach and potential participants to establish what the focus will be.

These initial discussions are about:

- finding out about the starting point
- clarifying the intentions of the programme
- identifying the desired outcomes and impact
- exploring the support options available to support that journey
- agreeing expectations, responsibilities and practical requirements.

The focus of this structured discussion will be:

- **Where are you now?** - the focus of the coaching
- **How can you get there?** - the most appropriate option
- **Where do you want to be?** – your goals and desired outcomes
- **How will you know when you get there?** - how impact and success will be evaluated.

At the end of the coaching, there will be an opportunity to reflect on the learning, and identify how this learning and the development or actions achieved can be sustained and supported.

The content of coaching conversations is completely confidential, with participants expected to reflect and take actions between sessions. It is important that this commitment is made.

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"We learned so much from the action learning set. It was a great experience and the facilitator really supported us. We still use those approaches now and meet regularly as a group to carry on this work ..."

Terry Knight
Vice Principal
North West Kent College

"The coaching programme is helping groups to work together to focus on a problem and drill down to its core. The facilitator helps the group keep on track and to find ways through it."

Ilir Phillips
Secondary Transformation Team
Kent

How do I find out more?

For further information, and an informal discussion about the opportunities and benefits of the 14-19 coaching programme, please contact the NCSL or CEL enquiry lines directly.

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