



Coaching

Frequently Asked Questions

What is Coaching?

Coaching is a recognised practice and approach to personal and professional development, supporting organisational change, enabling performance, and problem solving. It is non-directive, focusing on specific skills and goals. Coaching is always confidential and individualised.

Coaching can play a crucial role in organisational development, talent management, and in fostering a coaching culture in organisations. It aims to enhance the employee experience and employee engagement. A coach supports and guides individuals or groups in areas of personal or professional development. They help coachees identify their goals, overcome obstacles, and make progress towards achieving desired outcomes. Coaches provide a structured and supportive environment for their coachees to explore their potential, gain clarity, and act towards positive change. Through effective communication, active listening, and powerful questioning techniques, coaches facilitate self-discovery and growth. Their role includes helping coachees set realistic and meaningful goals, develop action plans, and hold them accountable for their progress. Coaches often work with individuals seeking personal development, career advancement, improved relationships, lifestyle changes, or enhanced well-being.

Where will I find information on coaching in MU?

Coaching Webpage: [Coaching | Maynooth University](#)

- [Coaching Policy](#)
- Coaching Agreement
- Coaching FAQ's
- [Coaching Request Form](#)
- [Expression of Interest to become a Coach Form](#)

Queries to: people.development@mu.ie

What is outside the Coaching relationship?

Coaching in the University is not designed to specifically identify an individual's suitability for promotion, either through personal promotion schemes or by appointment to a higher grade but aims to facilitate and increase the effectiveness of individual's participation in these processes.

Coaching is distinct and separate from other management processes in Maynooth University e.g. Promotions, Tenure Track, Performance Management, etc.

What are the benefits of Coaching?

Coaching has benefits for the Coachee, the Coach and the University.

The focus of coaching is to:

- Unlock the potential to enhance performance.
- Facilitate reflection and create an understanding of strengths, challenges and highlight areas an individual wishes to improve or develop.
- Support individuals to develop and work towards achieving long term goals.
- Help adapt to changing work conditions and circumstances.
- Provide a greater understanding of team dynamics.
- Provide a safe space to communicate openly and honestly.
- Develop results that work for the individual.

How do I become a Coach in MU?

MU has a small internal coaching panel all of whom have a coaching qualification and have put themselves forward via expression of interest.

Eligible staff should discuss their interest in being an internal Coach with their Head/manager in advance of submitting their [expression of interest form](#), as the expectation would be for internal coaches to conduct their coaching sessions during normal working hours.

The specific criteria to qualify to form part of the coaching panel is as follows:

- Be a staff member of the university with 2 years remaining on your contract of employment.
- Hold a coaching qualification accredited by a recognised coaching body (e.g. [AC](#), [EMCC](#), [ICF](#))
- Be available to commit to a maximum of 15 hours of coaching per annum.
- Be available to commit to and engage in quarterly coaching supervision sessions (with an external supervisor) of about 1-1.5-hour duration each.
- Be available to attend required Coaching Panel meetings once the panel is appointed.

Is Coaching confidential?

Confidentiality is essential and a key part of Coaching. There must be a high degree of trust and confidentiality which should be agreed between the Coach and the Coachee at the first meeting as part of their coaching agreement.

What is involved in the Coaching process/relationship?

The relationship places no obligation on either party beyond its developmental intent and it is built upon trust and mutual respect. The coach will support and guide the coachee in areas of personal or professional development (e.g. individuals may be seeking personal development, career advancement, improved relationships, lifestyle changes, or enhanced well-being).

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If I have been coached in MU previously, can I apply to be coached again?

Yes, you can, however, priority will be given to those who have not availed of coaching previously.

Staff being offered coaching as part of another development support (e.g. leadership programme) will not be provided with coaching from the Internal panel in the same academic year. Staff who are being mentored will not be offered coaching in the same academic year. This is to allow staff who are not availing of those options priority access to the coaching.

What are the responsibilities of the Coachee?

The Coachee will drive the Coaching agenda:

- Schedule the sessions with their appointed Coach.
- Maintain confidentiality when engaging in the Coaching process.
- Recognise areas where they need growth or development.
- Actively participate in defining what they want to achieve and why.
- Commit to making necessary changes based on coaching insights.
- Seek feedback and reflect on it to enhance self-awareness.
- Communicate openly with the Coach about their thoughts and progress.
- Be open to trying different approaches, behaviours, and skills to learn and improve.
- Maintaining confidentiality

What is the role of the Coach?

It is the responsibility of the Coach to:

- Inform Learning & Development of their availability to facilitate coaching.
- Maintain confidentiality when engaging in the Coaching process.
- Maintain their practice and strive for continuous improvement through the engagement and delivery of Coaching and/or engaging in Group Supervision.
- Create a conducive environment for coaching conversations, ensuring openness and trust.
- Establish rapport with the Coachee, making them feel comfortable and encouraging open dialogue.
- Help the Coachee to clarify their goals, define their objectives and understand the reasons behind them.
- Assist Coachees in devising practical plans to achieve their goals.
- Provide constructive feedback on the Coachee's progress.
- Offer support and encouragement when needed.
- Recognise the Coachees achievements to reinforce their progress.

How do I apply for Coaching?

If you would like to request coaching, Please read the [Coaching Policy](#) and complete the [Coaching Request Form](#). Please do not contact coaches directly.

How are Coaches and Coachees paired?

Individuals who wish to undertake coaching (the Coachee) will be paired with a Coach by the Chair of the Internal Coaching Panel. Coaches will be matched with someone outside of their department, based on their experience as per their Coaching Profile and the reason coaching is required.

How frequently should you meet?

Each Coach and Coachee should organise an initial 30-minute introductory meeting where they can both establish that the coaching relationship can progress ('chemistry' check). Typically, the Coachee will receive 3 coaching sessions. The first is usually 1.5 hours duration followed by 2 sessions of 1 hour duration. Each session is on a one-to-one basis, is individualised and personal. How these meetings are scheduled should be agreed between the Coach and the Coachee.

How long does the coaching last?

In most cases, the three coaching sessions should be completed within a 3–4-month period. This can be agreed between the Coach and Coachee at the initial meeting.

Can I request coaching at any point in the year?

Yes, applications to be coached by a member of the Internal Coaching Panel will be open all year-round. A [coaching request form](#) is required to be completed by an interested staff member and is available on the L&D website. Staff must have the approval of their Head/manager to partake in the coaching.

What happens if a break is required during the coaching for unforeseen circumstances?

Any changes to the original agreement should be discussed between the Coach and the Coachee. If the Coach cannot continue for a short period an alternative arrangement (meeting online, take a short break and resume coaching, shorter meetings) may be agreed between the Coach and the Coachee.

If the Coach can still commit to the 3 sessions, then they will have fulfilled what was agreed. Coaches have other workload commitments and so the coaching process does have to have an end.

What happens if a break is required during the coaching process for statutory leave?

Your availability and the time commitment involved are something you should consider before expressing an interest in being a Coachee or Coach.

If statutory leave (e.g. Career Break, Maternity Leave, Parental Leave, Long Term Sick Leave etc.) is required, please let your Coach know or as a Coach, please inform people.development@mu.ie

Where should we meet?

A neutral location is recommended, somewhere where a confidential conversation can take place undisturbed. This can be in person or online in a place where both parties can talk confidentiality and without distraction.

I am not sure the coaching is working out, what should I do?

In the first place you should try and discuss this with your Coach. Then you can revisit what you decide if an issue occurs. If this isn't an option, contact people.development@mu.ie to discuss further.

How is coaching evaluated?

Reviews by the Coach and Coachee should take place briefly at the end of each session.

Learning & Development will also evaluate the coaching process and survey the Coach and Coachee on their experiences. The feedback will be used to inform future coaching initiatives. Feedback on the coaching is welcome throughout the year, please email people.development@mu.ie to arrange a meeting or to email your feedback.