BUDDYING PROGRAMME

Supporting Employee Induction…
Buddying Programme

SUPPORTING EMPLOYEE INDUCTION...

BUDDYING
Starting a new job can be daunting for people. If the transition into a new position can be made easier, it will relieve feelings of anxiety and insecurity and perhaps avoid an “induction crisis” in the first few weeks of employment.

One method of supporting the Induction period is to adopt a “Buddy Programme”, where the new employee is paired with an experienced employee as a “Buddy” to support the more informal but equally important aspects of the induction process.

Buddying may not just be for new staff. It can be helpful for staff who have transferred from other parts of the University or staff who have been on leave from work for an extensive period of time, e.g., for maternity or ill health.

So who does what?

1. What is Buddying?
2. What does a Buddy do?
3. Who should be appointed as a Buddy?
4. How is a Buddy appointed?
5. How to work with a Buddy?
1. WHAT IS BUDDYING?
A new work environment can present some challenges to a new member of staff. Local customs and culture (ways of doing things around here!), procedures and the workings of the office technology, all of which can seem simple, can serve to frustrate, confuse and concern a newcomer. In the first 3 to 6 months, a seasoned colleague can help considerably to assist the new employee to settle in and get up to speed quicker.

A Buddy, as the name implies, establishes a less formal relationship with the individual than a Manager or a Mentor.

2. A BUDDY WILL...
A Buddy is to act as an informal point of contact for the new member of staff, ensuring a warm welcome. Buddies will help to put the new member of staff at ease and support them whilst they develop their confidence in their new role.

The objectives of Buddying are:

• To assist new members to understand the University and working processes of the department. Buddies will also help the new member of staff to understand what their new colleagues do and their relationship with that person/position.

• To help the new member of staff, from their first day of joining, ensuring that they are introduced to their new colleagues.

A Buddy will meet the new member of staff on their first day and ensure that they introduce them to colleagues in the office. During the first week of joining, a Buddy will show them the environment and facilities both inside and outside the place of work, i.e., local banks, refectory, post office and other campus facilities.

• To show their new colleague where all the essentials can be found and where to go for further assistance.

• To help the new member of staff understand the culture of the organisation; highlighting (especially for younger or less confident colleagues) that they are not expected to ‘know everything’, that asking questions of others will be expected and that other team members, although busy, will be happy to assist.
A Buddy will talk through with the individual the organisational/departmental environment, resources, job content, technology and related documentation where appropriate, and help to interpret local jargon and use of acronyms.

- To help a new employee recognise other activities that they could be doing to support their understanding of their new role and the organisation. Relevant reading could include browsing the UQ website and the local Organisational Unit website, “New at UQ Website” and the Handbook of Policy and Procedures.

A Buddy will be ready to assist when their new colleague meets unfamiliar situations.

- To involve their colleague as soon as possible in the social aspects of their department, i.e., arrange a team lunch/morning tea during their first week.

### 3. WHO SHOULD BE APPOINTED AS A BUDDY

A Buddy must be willing to take on the role and have an approachable and friendly attitude. They should be preferably, but not necessarily, someone in the same department at the same or similar level, who is ‘around and available’ most of the time for helping the individual.

Ideally a Buddy should be of a similar age and background and have the ability to be an ‘informal friend’. This is especially important for younger, or less experienced, members of staff and for those new to the department’s/organisation’s environment.

### 4. HOW TO APPOINT A BUDDY

The Manager/Supervisor is responsible for appointing a Buddy prior to the new member of staff’s arrival. The appointed Buddy should understand the importance of this role and that it will last from 3 to 6 months, depending upon the complexity of the new member of staff’s position and their speed of adjustment.
5. HOW TO WORK WITH A BUDDY
A new member of staff should work closely with their Buddy and feel comfortable and relaxed about seeking their assistance in:

- Learning the organisational structure and where their position, and work, fits in.
- Using UQ systems, software and processes.
- Getting to know training and development opportunities E.g. the Staff Development website.
- Managing their working hours or other office/departmental procedures.
- Raising awareness of the ethos and culture of the Department/School/Faculty.
- Discovering social and recreational opportunities/activities.
- Identifying the unique contribution the new member of staff will make to a team.
- Encouraging attendance at UQ’s “New Staff Expo”.

The University of Queensland would like to thank NHS for allowing use of this guide, which has been adapted from: www.mentoring.scot.nhs.uk/docpdfs/CSABuddyGuidelines.doc