

SEDA Autumn Conference 2024



Session Title: Reimagining the PGCert in HE: Enabling Coaching Culture & Practice

Session Type: Practice Papers (20 minutes)

Main presenter(s): Daniel Cole, De Montfort University

Co presenter(s): Dr Hardeep Basra (Co-Presenting) De Montfort University

Session Summary: The session will reflect on the design and delivery of the "Coaching Conversations in Learning & Teaching" module, part of DMUs new PGCert in Empowering Education. This practice paper presentation will provide a rationale for the introduction of coaching-based education into PGCert programmes, outlining the topics and teaching and learning approaches used throughout the module and reviewing the feedback provided by students from the first cohort.

Session Outline: This session will explore the rationale behind the development of a new coaching-based module in the PGCert Empowering Education at DMU. The presentation will begin by contextualising the evolving role of educators in HE. In modern universities, teaching staff are increasingly expected to support not just academic growth but also the personal and professional development of students. Coaching offers an adaptable framework for fostering these skills, enhancing the capacity of educators to empower students, promote reflective practice, and cultivate a growth mindset.

Rationale for Coaching in Higher Education:

Coaching is a valuable skill for modern educators due to its ability to foster autonomy and deeper learning. Drawing on principles from adult learning theories, coaching encourages learners to take ownership of their development, promoting critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Research highlights that a coaching approach helps bridge the gap between content delivery and skills development, aligning with the shift toward student-centered learning (Wheeler, 2011).

Module Structure & Topics:

The Coaching Conversations in Learning & Teaching module is designed around practical coaching methodologies such as the GROW model (Whitmore, 2017) and reflective practice frameworks. It incorporates experiential learning, Action Learning Sets (ALS), role-playing, and peer feedback to build coaching competencies. Sessions are structured to explore active listening, powerful questioning, and the creation of effective learning environments.

Feedback from the First Cohort:

Participant reflections from the inaugural cohort indicate the module's positive impact on both teaching practice and student engagement. A range of applications have already been shared



by students, suggesting a potentially transformational influence at this early stage of their careers.

The session will close by discussing the long-term potential for embedding coaching culture into higher education, transforming traditional pedagogical approaches.

References: Wheeler, S. (2011) The future of learning and the rise of coaching culture, *Journal of Educational Leadership*, 69(2), pp. 45-58.

Whitmore, J. (2017) *Coaching for performance: The principles and practice of coaching and leadership*. 5th ed. London: Nicholas Brealey Publishing.