



ALL Language Teacher Peer Mentoring Programme



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Principles and Processes

The Association for Language Learning (ALL) Peer Mentoring Programme is an initiative that supports language teachers across all sectors and phases in the United Kingdom, through structured, supportive mentoring. It aligns with ALL's mission to represent and support language professionals and to promote high-quality, inclusive language education across the UK. The Peer Mentoring Programme is open to all members of ALL.

1. Aims and ALL Rationale

The programme aims to:

- Enhance teacher wellbeing by providing confidential spaces for reflection, problem solving and critical friendship.
- Reduce professional isolation by building cross-phase, cross-sector communities of practice under the umbrella of the national subject Association for Language Learning
- Promote inclusive and equitable mentoring that values diverse identities, languages, routes into teaching and career stages, reflecting ALL's commitment to linguistic and educational diversity
- Develop leadership and mentoring capacity within the language community, contributing to improved standards of language teaching and learning nationally
- Support language teachers' subject-specific professional development and pedagogy, complementing ALL's CPD, publications and events.
- By locating the peer mentoring programme within ALL, individual teachers' development is explicitly connected to a wider national effort to raise the profile and quality of language teaching and learning.

2. Principles: The ALL Peer Mentoring Charter

The programme is underpinned by a short ALL Peer Mentoring Charter, which all participants sign up to. It draws directly on ALL's ethos as an independent, member-led Association for everyone involved in language education.

- Inclusive: Open to ALL members - language teachers, specialists and non-specialists, teaching assistants and language providers from all phases, sectors, languages and routes into teaching
- Diverse: Intentionally brings together teachers with different linguistic, cultural and professional backgrounds, echoing ALL's commitment to language policies that reflect the linguistic diversity and language needs of the country
- Supportive: Provides a non-judgemental, developmental space distinct from line-management or appraisal, consistent with ALL's role as a professional Association rather than an accountability body
- Confidential: Mentoring conversations remain confidential within professional and safeguarding boundaries; no information is shared with employers or colleagues
- Critical friendship: Encourages honest, reflective dialogue that combines support with thoughtful challenge, building on ALL's tradition of practitioner enquiry and research-informed practice
- Professional development and wellbeing: Keeps a dual focus on classroom practice, curriculum and assessment, and on the emotional demands and wellbeing of language teachers
- Peer mentoring: Recognises that expertise is distributed; mentoring is a reciprocal learning partnership in which both mentor and mentee can learn, question and grow, reflecting ALL's belief that "together we are stronger".

These principles are summarised in participant materials, on the ALL website and in induction sessions.

3. Programme Structure

The programme follows an academic year cycle, with joining points in September, January and April, and offers one-to-one mentoring, coordinated nationally by ALL and supported by regional and local branches.

3.1 Participation and roles

- Target group: Language teachers and teaching assistants who are involved in language teaching in all sectors and phases, including Early Career Teachers, returners, heads of department and teacher educators connected to ALL networks.
- Roles: Participants can join as mentors and / or mentees; roles may change in future cycles to encourage a shared culture of support/
- Governance: A small ALL Mentoring Coordination Group (approved by ALL's Management Board) oversees design, quality and alignment with ALL's strategic priorities for language education.

3.2 Mode of mentoring

Face-to-face and e-mentoring (one to one)

- Structured, time-bound relationships established through an ALL-coordinated matching process. Where geography permits, pairs may meet in person, including alongside branch events, if desired.
- E-mentoring (online) is a core feature, allowing teachers nationwide to participate and reflecting ALL's commitment to reaching members across regions.
- Once per half term with the possibility to meet once a month if preferred.

Note: In future, as the Peer Mentoring Programme becomes more established, mentoring groups may be considered to complement the one-to-one mentoring and diversify the mentoring offer.

4. Processes and Expectations

4.1 Recruitment and matching

- Recruitment is promoted via ALL's website, newsletters, social media, conferences and branch networks, positioning peer mentoring as part of ALL's core offer to members
- Participants complete a short online form with sector, phase, languages, experience, areas of interest, and preferences for identical/diverse matching and mode (face-to-face or online)
- Depending on experience, preference or need, the participants will be separated into two groups: mentors and/or mentees
- An ALL Mentoring Coordination Group undertakes matching, aiming for:
 - Clarity of purpose and shared interests
 - A balance of identical and diverse elements
 - Equitable access across regions and sectors and clear avoidance of line-management relationships.

4.2 Induction and resources

- Online induction entitled: "The ALL Peer Mentoring programme induction", a session offered for mentors and mentees, scheduled within ALL's professional development calendar
- Induction covers programme aims, the ALL Peer Mentoring Charter, mentoring skills (listening, questioning, feedback), safeguarding and other sources of support
- ALL provides a concise digital handbook including:
 - Programme overview and calendar
 - The ALL Peer Mentoring Charter
 - A template mentoring agreement and suggested agendas for early meetings
 - Reflection tools and signposting to relevant ALL resources, including journals, case studies and relevant materials.

4.3 Mentoring agreements and one to one meetings

- In the first meeting, each pair agrees a simple mentoring “learning contract” covering:
 - Frequency, mode and length of meetings
 - Reminder of boundaries and confidentiality
 - Priority focus areas (e.g. personal development, behaviour management, curriculum design, assessment, multilingual pedagogies, leadership, workload and wellbeing)
- The agreement is reviewed regularly and at the final meeting to reflect on progress and next steps. It is anticipated that each mentoring relationship will last between 6-9 months.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

Mentors

Mentors are expected to:

- Provide a supportive, non-judgemental space grounded in ALL’s values of professionalism and collaboration
- Use active listening and questioning to help mentees to analyse practice, context and career decisions
- Take brief minutes, recording action points and items for future discussion
- Share subject-specific knowledge, networks and resources where appropriate, including signposting to ALL opportunities and materials
- Respect confidentiality and agreed boundaries and commit reliably to meetings.

Mentees

Mentees are expected to:

- Take an active role in setting goals and bringing questions or dilemmas to mentoring
- Reflect on practice between meetings and be open to feedback and challenge as part of critical friendship
- Attend the meetings and respect the agreed time
- Respect mentors’ time and boundaries and communicate clearly about needs.

ALL and branches

- The ALL Peer Mentoring Coordination Group manages recruitment, matching, induction, mentoring circles and evaluation, and ensures alignment with ALL’s broader work and advocacy. They provide support and guidance for both mentors and mentees.
- Following a briefing by the ALL Peer Mentoring Coordination Group, it is anticipated that ALL branches, regional groups and others (e.g. ITET Forum) promote the programme locally and may host in-person networking or reflection opportunities to complement mentoring.

6. Ethics, Safeguarding and Data

- The programme is developmental and voluntary; it is clearly separated from performance management, capability or formal appraisal processes, in line with ALL's status as an independent professional Association.
- Safeguarding and professional codes within participants' institutions remain paramount; mentors encourage colleagues to follow local procedures for any safeguarding or serious professional concerns.
- ALL handles participant data securely (GDPR) and in line with its governance arrangements; evaluation reports are anonymised and used to improve the programme and strengthen the case for better support for language teachers.