Guidelines on how to approach the first meeting.

We all know what it is like to start work in a new environment. As a buddy, you will be helping a new member of staff settle in and find their place within this community. As this is a new experience for both partners involved, the following guidelines should aid in establishing your relationship and advise you on what to cover during your initial meetings.

Establish an initial meeting – what to cover
As this is an informal scheme, we recommend you get in touch with your match (once one has been established) and arrange a causal meeting to go over the benefits of this scheme. Having this meeting in an informal environment is advised as it will reduce the likelihood of the new employee feeling intimidated or overwhelmed. Remember, this scheme is in place to aid in the induction process – not to complicate it – therefore having a causal approach to this is paramount. However, it is important that certain aspects are covered, the following will help in what to go through in your initial meetings and are possible suggestions of how to approach the first week.

N.B: illustrative list not exhaustive

- Outline your role as the buddy and experience of working at the University.
- Invite them to have lunch with you the first week.
- Get to know their professional background and ask them what they believe the buddy experience will entail.
- Explain what they can expect from you, your strengths and possible limitations.
- Arrange a suitable time to show them around campus. Possible points of interest could be the libraries, Aberdeen Sports Village (ASV), the Hub, café’s, main buildings, and convenience stores on/near campus etc.
- Arrange a time to show them around the office and explain how to use the basic items such as the phones, printers, computers etc., and where the store room, kitchen, bathrooms etc., are.
- Inform them on office norms (such as cake Friday or other external office gatherings), and add them to informal contact lists, get them involved.
- Get to know them on a personal level, see if you share similarities outside of work. It is not mandatory, but it could be a nice touch.
- Try to make them comfortable enough to ask any questions they have regarding work or office norms.
- Ask them what they felt was missing from their formal induction, and see if you can fill in the blanks, i.e. car parking, unknown abbreviations etc.
- It is a supportive role so be mindful not to criticize. Always seek advice from a Buddy Champion if you feel something is wrong.
- Inform them on ‘who’s who’ at the university.
- Explain to them what your role does not include and that you are both bound to confidentiality.
Tips for Buddies

- At times, listening may be more important than giving advice.
- Keep a positive attitude and be open-minded throughout this experience.
- Don’t try and force the relationship, overtime it will hopefully develop naturally.
- You cannot always ensure success, do not get disheartened if things do not go to plan.
- Do not worry about being perceived as an expert in all matters – your buddy will value your experience and knowledge and is grateful for this opportunity.
- Understand that it may be possible that your buddy could have a different learning style to yours. Through communication, it is possible to work around this and find a common ground.
- Do not try and cover everything immediately, developing a relationship takes time and ensuring they retain information you give them will require processing time. It is possible that your buddy only knows questions to ask after they have had some time to reflect on the information you have already given them.
- Be honest. Receiving real advice can make all the difference.
- It is a supportive role, so be mindful not to criticize. Always seek advice from a Buddy Champion if you feel something is wrong.