

Career Development Service

# Client Handbook



Charity no SC 000951

# Career Development Service

Welcome to Dyslexia Scotland's Career Development Service.

Dyslexia Scotland's purpose is to enable dyslexic people to realise their potential. Our Career Development Service is committed to supporting you to identify and make progress towards your goals in a way that works for the way you think and learn. Our service aims to make these differences:

- clients develop, strengthen and apply career management skills
- clients are more confident, resilient and optimistic for their futures
- clients are more aware of their skills, strengths and achievements
- clients make progress in their career

This handbook guides you through the process of working with a Dyslexia Scotland volunteer Career Mentor.

Career Mentors are volunteers who provide their professional services for free. Mentors can help you plan your next steps, make decisions about your career path and support you along the way.

We look forward to taking this next step with you.

Katie Carmichael  
Career Coach

# The Career Mentor

Our Career Mentors are volunteers with a professional careers guidance or coaching background.

Career Mentor Volunteers are skilled in helping you to understand your strengths, move forward in your career, and take the next step with confidence.

Our mentors have a range of professional backgrounds and experiences. We select them both on their skills in being able to coach and on their caring values.

Mentors are providing their service on a voluntary basis in communities. They are not based in Dyslexia Scotland's office.



Your first meeting is for the mentor to find out more about you and your goal. The mentor may be interested in your wider world, and will ask questions to help them see the bigger picture. They might take notes to help them remember key points.

You can tell them about your situation and the type of help you think you may need, and how you prefer to learn.

You might just need a 'quick fix' to help you progress your career in one or two sessions, or you may need longer-term support. You can explore this with the mentor. It is important to agree a plan together with goals and timescales, and to plan for how and when the mentoring should finish.

You and the mentor agree the main goal you are working on together, so you are both working towards the same purpose.

If the mentor doesn't have the skills, knowledge or experience you need, we'll do our very best to connect you with another professional or organisation who can help.



# Types of help

Our Career Mentors can help you with:

## Understanding yourself:

Understanding your strengths

Learning about how you think and learn

Being your best self



## Packaging and presenting yourself:

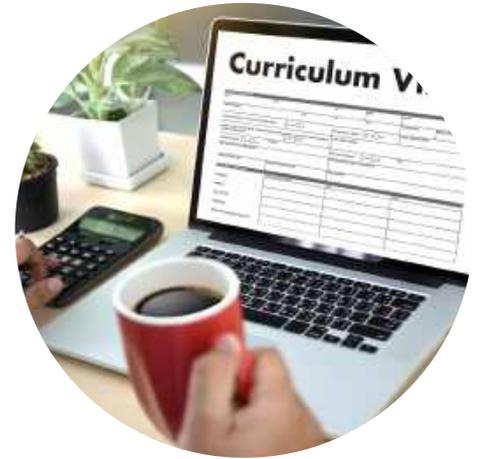
CVs

Application forms - for jobs or further education

Interview and presentation skills

Online professional profiles

Developing your professional identity



## Finding the right fit for you:

Looking for work or learning that fulfils your needs and strengths

Making career plans and choices

## Career growth:

Accessing career development experiences and opportunities

Making contacts and building networks



# What is involved

Your mentor will want to agree:

- the main goal you want to work towards
- a timescale for working together
- where and how often you will meet
- how you will keep in touch

Between meetings you will have tasks to work on. The mentor may suggest activities, opportunities, people, places or agencies who can also help you, so make the most of the exercises and opportunities they provide, and update them on your progress at your next catch up.



## Keeping your information safe

Your mentor will keep your private information secure. Dyslexia Scotland has strict Privacy and Confidentiality policies. The mentor will only share information with others in your support network with your express permission, or if they believe you are at risk to yourself or to others in some way.

# What you can expect from your mentor

- A free, professional service
- Someone who treats you as their equal, listens to your needs and collaborates with you on working towards your goal. They may be critical, but in a supportive way
- Respect for you as the expert of yourself
- Someone committed to supporting you to move forward
- Confidentiality – keeping your information private. Mentors will not tell others what you tell them, unless they have concerns that your safety or well-being is at risk
- A personalised service suited to your needs
- Understanding of dyslexia
- Someone with your interests and ambitions at heart
- Professional, ethical behaviour and boundaries



# What your mentor expects from you

- You are ready and self-motivated to make changes
- You are honest and upfront
- You trust them and are willing to take on their suggestions, or to discuss what support you may need to help you progress
- You stick to any agreements you make with the mentor – or let them know what difficulties you are having doing so
- You respect the mentor's boundaries – they are friendly, but not your friend
- You will give feedback on the coaching/mentoring experience when asked by Dyslexia Scotland. This may be a questionnaire or interview.

# Ending the journey

It's important to have a positive ending, no matter what stage. You and the mentor should review your progress regularly, and you'll have the chance to give feedback on the whole experience before you part ways.

Once your journey with the mentor has ended, Dyslexia Scotland's Career Coach will be in touch to get your feedback either by telephone or online survey and to review the progress you feel you have made and what difference the service has made to you. Your comments will help us to develop and improve the service.

In some cases, Dyslexia Scotland will ask to feature your experience in a case study. The mentor will discuss this with you towards the end of your journey with them.

It's very important we get your honest feedback on the mentoring experience, so please take the time to respond when invited.



# My Mentor Agreement



Mentor \_\_\_\_\_

Contact information \_\_\_\_\_

## Contact agreement

We will have contact:

Face to face       Email       Telephone       Video chat

When? \_\_\_\_\_

How often? \_\_\_\_\_

The main goal we are working towards is:

Any other important information or agreements made:

# Our Definitions

**Career** - your whole journey through life, learning and work

**Resilient** - being able to cope with, and recover from, challenges and difficulties

**Confident** – Belief you can reach goals; having trust in people, plans or the future

**Optimistic** - hope for the future; belief that setbacks are temporary, not your fault and can be changed; ability to own your successes or accomplishments as something you are responsible for

**Goal** – A general term for what you working towards; this can be quite open and non-specific

**Strengths** – Things we are good at and enjoy. Strengths can include skills, qualities, training, learning and qualifications attained; life and work experiences; talents and natural abilities

"Career is not just the time we spend on the labour market .... rather, career is a thread that runs through your life joining your paid work, with your unpaid work, education, family time, leisure, citizenship and everything else. "  
(Tristram Hooley, 2020)

# Feedback

The feedback we will ask you for is as follows. You can answer in person, on the telephone, by email or at this link, or you can complete the form below and return it to Dyslexia Scotland. <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/careers2021>

## The differences we have made to you

Because of working with a mentor:

I am more confident Yes  No

I am more resilient Yes  No

I am more optimistic for my future Yes  No

I am more aware of my strengths Yes  No

I have developed my career planning/management skills Yes  No

I feel able to make progress in my career Yes  No

I have more positive view of my dyslexia Yes  No

Useful things I learned from working with the mentor are:

What I liked most about the service was:

I might have learned more if:

I'm still not sure about:

What the mentor did well for me was:

What the mentor could have done better for for me was:

Any other comments or feedback:

## What else does Dyslexia Scotland offer to support my employability and career development?

- Helpline and Web Chat
- Adult Networks
- Tutor list service
- Assessment service
- Websites and social media pages
- Resources and fact sheets
- Membership
- Events
- Training and workshops
- Arts Award (for up to age 25)

Website: [www.dyslexiascotland.org.uk](http://www.dyslexiascotland.org.uk)

email: [info@dyslexiascotland.org.uk](mailto:info@dyslexiascotland.org.uk)

office: 01786 446650

Helpline: 0344 800 84 84

Cameron House  
Forthside Way  
Stirling  
FK8 1QZ

Charity no: Sc 000951