



North Western Deanery Careers CESR Champions

Information for potential Coachees

The CESR Champions Project

The North Western Deanery is aware that there is increasing demand within Trusts for support for potential CESR applicants, and is addressing this by training “CESR Champions”. The project is lead by the Deanery Careers Team in collaboration with the SAS Project team.

CESR Champions are being trained to deliver support to potential applicants to CESR – “Certificate of Eligibility for Specialist Registration”. Staff Grades, Associate Specialists and other non-training, non-consultant grade doctors must go through this process should they wish to achieve specialist registration. Specialist registration is required by the GMC to make a doctor eligible to apply for consultant grade posts. SAS doctors have often been working in service provision posts for many years, often at a clinical level equivalent to that of consultants and a good proportion of this grade of doctor naturally aspire to consultant status. The CESR application process requires them to demonstrate in great detail their clinical and non-clinical skills and competencies to the equivalence of a specialty trainee having completed core and specialist training. The volume of documentation and the lack of a formal structure allowing them to generate the evidence needed mean that this can be a long and sometimes daunting process.

CESR Champions will be trained to provide CESR application workshops to groups of SAS doctors, as well as one to one coaching sessions for a limited number of applicants. Our CESR champions have for the most part been through the CESR route themselves and all have a strong interest in Careers and in supporting their SAS colleagues. Our Champions are all volunteers, and unless negotiated with their Trusts, are providing support to colleagues in their own time.

Workshops will be available from March 2012 when we will be able to provide you with a list of trained CESR Champions in our Deanery. A limited amount of coaching relationships can be undertaken as of October 2011.

What is coaching?

Coaching and mentoring are often discussed together and the boundaries between the two are flexible; it is difficult to pin down a definitive definition of coaching¹.

A general definition might be:

*"A coach is a collaborative partner who works with the learner to help them achieve goals, solve problems, learn and develop"*²

*"Mentoring is to support and encourage people to manage their own learning in order that they may maximise their potential, develop their skills, improve their performance and become the person they want to be."*³

What you can expect is a structured, confidential, time bound one to one appointment with a coach. Most often coaching happens over a relatively long period of time; 3 sessions are considered a minimum for any kind of progression.

Coaching is always coachee led: your coach will not make suggestions or push you in any particular direction. They will listen to your concerns, help you consider your options, ask probing questions to ensure both they and yourself have understood the situation or project you wish to discuss. Coaching is very much goal oriented; your coach will support you in exploring your goals, support you in making decisions and help you decide upon clear goals and intermediary goals. At all times, the onus remains with the coachee to take responsibility for their project and implement any actions laid down in coaching sessions.

¹ <http://www.coachingnetwork.org.uk/ResourceCentre/WhatAreCoachingAndMentoring.htm>: look here for a more detailed comparison of coaching and mentoring.

² Caplan (2003) Coaching for the Future: How Smart Companies Use Coaching and Mentoring, CIPD London

³ Eric Parsloe, The Oxford School of Coaching & Mentoring

What is coaching in the context of CESR applications?

Our CESR Champions have a specific remit in the coaching sessions they will provide to colleagues; unlike in a classic coaching session, the goal to be discussed here is pre-agreed: a potential application for CESR.

Your coach will help you explore options and decide if CESR is the right route for you in achieving your career goals. Once you have made a firm decision on whether to apply, they will listen to your concerns, your progress and your successes. They will support you as you break down the large and sometimes daunting amount of documentation and evidence you will need to provide into smaller more manageable items and intermediary goals, and help you ensure these goals are realistic, achievable and time-bound. They will help you find the motivation you need to continue to progress with your preparation and to overcome any hurdles or difficulties you might encounter. They will encourage you to structure both your preparation and your application portfolio. Most importantly they will remain non-judgemental and supportive no matter what stage you are at or what decision you might make.

It is important that coachees also have a clear understanding also of what *not* to expect from their CESR Champion. Your Champion will *not* go through the GMC or Royal College requirements for you; this is something you must do for yourself, although of course you are free to discuss what you have learnt with them. They will *not* negotiate with your Trust or management on your behalf; you will have to approach them yourself for support, although your coach will be happy to help you consider how best you might do so. They will *not* go through your portfolio page by page with you; this is something you will need to find others to help you with. At all times in your CESR coaching relationship, ownership of application preparation will remain with the coachee; your CESR Champion is there to support you, not to do the work for you.

Much of the structure and content of your coaching sessions will be agreed between yourself and your coach in the first few sessions. You will agree upon how often you meet and the length of the sessions. You will agree on how long the coaching relationship will last; this might be a time scale (x months) or goal based (until an application is submitted). Your coaching relationship will also be regularly reviewed, with goals and structures re-visited to ensure they are still relevant to both coach and coachee. Your coach will ask for informal feedback in

review sessions, and you will be asked to feedback more formally to the Deanery. This more formal feedback will be collated with other feedback and returned anonymously to the coach.

All sessions will be entirely free to coachees. In return, the Deanery asks that you cooperate with requests for feedback and anonymised data (so as to ensure the project's longevity), and that you show respect to your coach by always giving fair warning when unable to attend a planned coaching session and making sure that you strive to always complete any goals you have committed to in sessions.

The Deanery team are confident this project addresses a genuine need for SAS doctors and will be beneficial to Trusts, potential CESR applicants and Champions.

How to setup a coaching relationship with a CESR Champion

Contact the Deanery Careers team at l.meaney@nwpgmd.nhs.uk, stating your name, Trust, Specialty and how far into the application process you are currently. Your request will be anonymised and posted on the CESR Champions' forum. Should a Champion become available, the Careers team will contact you giving you their name, trust and contact details. You will then agree details of a first meeting directly with your Champion.

How to prepare for a first CESR coaching session

We expect you to have examined the GMC website documentation on applying for CESR, as well as the Royal College requirements for your specialty. No coaching relationship will be approved until you have looked into this yourself.

We strongly recommend that potential applicants also look at the new Deanery online course "Applying for CESR". This is available to all doctors working in the North Western Deanery at: <http://vlc.nwpgmd.nhs.uk>

Should you have any further questions not answered here or in other information documentation available, please don't hesitate to contact Laure Meaney, Careers Project Assistant at l.meaney@nwpgmd.nhs.uk or 0161 625 7635.