Vice-Chancellor's Mentoring Programme
Best practice case studies

Introduction and overview

The Vice-Chancellor's Mentoring Programme was launched in 2017 as part of the University of Nottingham's activities to develop an inclusive culture. It signalled a personal commitment from Vice-Chancellor Professor Shearer West CBE to support senior leaders with protected characteristics more fully.

An annual programme open to senior leaders across all job roles in the university, it combines personal 1:1 mentoring meetings with the Vice-Chancellor; shadowing a minimum of two senior university meetings – one of these being a University Executive Board meeting; Myers Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) assessments; and connecting together as a mentee group.

Now in its third year, 26 individuals have been mentored personally by the Vice-Chancellor. 57 unsuccessful applicants have also been matched to alternative Executive Board and other senior leader mentors, demonstrating the university's continued commitment to supporting and developing the equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) agenda through personal connections.

This case study provides an insight into the experiences of one of the VC's mentees, their reasons for applying for the programme, and what they gained from the experience.

For further information about the University of Nottingham's Vice-Chancellor's Mentoring Programme, contact Carol Steed, Leadership and Management Director. carol.steed@nottingham.ac.uk

**Professor Robert Mokaya,
Pro-Vice-Chancellor for
Global Engagement**
University of Nottingham.

Q. Why did you apply for the Vice-Chancellor's Mentoring Programme?

A. I was within the group of staff targeted by the programme, and it offered a unique opportunity to experience mentoring in a way I had not been before. The personal involvement of the VC was also attractive and the manner in which it was packaged as part of the wider Leadership and Management Academy offer.

Q. Are there specific challenges you believe you faced that you thought this programme could help you overcome or deal with more effectively?

A. It was not clear to me what my next step in leadership would be.

Q. **What has been the biggest impact for you that you have gained from your engagement with the programme?**

A. Learning from the VC's own personal journey and experience and obstacles she had to deal with. I was also able to more fully understand the demands at the senior most level of university leadership. I also came away with a better understanding of how complex we are as an organisation.

Q. **Has engaging with this had any impact on your career, and if so, how?**

A. I took on a Pro-Vice-Chancellor role soon after. Engagement with the programme allowed me to see more clearly how I can lead and be a team player at this senior level.

Q. **Are there any specific elements of learning that you have found useful, and have you been able to apply these into your workplace/working practices?**

A.
- Time management
- Team working, leading by example
- Prioritisation of tasks
- Developing strategies for the whole organisation rather than my own development

Q. **What advice would you give to others who might be considering getting involved in a mentoring programme?**

A. Have an open mind and be willing to learn and to challenge yourself. Constantly think of what might be your next step in leadership and work towards it.

Q. **Are there any other insights or thoughts that you wish to share?**

A. This is an excellent programme, which is well targeted.

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