

'Students Mentoring Staff' Program

Overview

Starting in 2019, La Trobe University launched the 'Students Mentoring Staff' program. The program aims to build close one-on-one relationships between students and staff to help one another share perspectives, provide advice, and discuss their experiences. Through the program, students will be paired with either professional or academic staff and will serve as 'student-mentors' to facilitate dialogue about what it is like to be a student at La Trobe today.

To participate in the program, all staff must meet with their student mentors at least three times during the semester (minimum 30 minutes per meeting). Meetings can take place in a staff workplace, over a cup of coffee, in the library, or if matched with a regional student/staff, on Zoom. Each of the three sessions will have a specific topic for the student and staff to use as a conversation starter if they wish.

Responsibilities of Students and Staff

Student Responsibilities	Staff Responsibilities
Complete a 30-minute Zoom pre-mentoring session to learn about how to support staff mentoring and facilitate the student perspective	Complete a 30-minute Zoom pre-mentoring session to learn about the importance of the student perspective and how to get the most of the experience
Meet three times with your staff mentee over the semester (either in person or on Zoom)	Meet three times with your staff mentee over the semester (either in person or on Zoom)
Offer end of semester feedback	Offer end of semester feedback to program coordinator to improve the program
Attend an end of semester thank you event	Attend an end of semester thank you event
Be timely, respectful, and kind	Be timely, respectful, and kind

*Please note, we ask the staff member to email the student to set up the first meeting.

Staff Benefits

The program aims to provide staff a safe and friendly environment to become more aware of the student perspective and reflect on their inclusive practices. It provides an opportunity to rethink and/or reaffirm their daily practices and what they can do support student engagement and success.

Contact

If you are interested in participating in the program, please lodge an Expression of Interest at our website at: <https://www.latrobe.edu.au/learning-and-teaching/student-success/student-partnerships>

You can also contact Dr Mollie Dollinger (Academic Lead, Student Partnerships):
m.dollinger@latrobe.edu.au

Example of Mentoring Sessions Questions

Session 1. Initial Introduction (Weeks 1-3 of the semester)

Staff to ask Students:

Why did you decide to attend La Trobe University? What do you enjoy about La Trobe University?
What ways do you think staff could improve in my area/department?

Students to ask Staff:

What are your personal values and approaches to supporting students' learning or student success?
Why did you choose to sign up to have a student mentor? What do you hope to learn?

Session 2. Role-Specific Advice (Weeks 4-6 of the semester)

Staff to ask Students:

My role at La Trobe is _____. In my team/department, one of the questions we always want to ask students is _____. What do you think about this? How could we improve? Do you have any other advice on how my department could better connect and engage with students?

Students to ask Staff:

What do you already know about students' experiences here at La Trobe? How do you support La Trobe's cultural qualities of connected, accountable, innovative and care to students?

Session 3. Where do we go from here? (Weeks 7-10)

Staff to ask Students:

Reflecting on your experiences so far at La Trobe University what advice and/or suggestions would you provide staff? How has mentoring a staff member/learning the staff perspective helped you understand the university?

Students to ask Staff:

What are the come of the greatest challenges you have engaging with students? How do accommodate the diversity in our student cohort (e.g. across backgrounds, social capital, preferences) in your daily practices? What more could you do to support students to share their thoughts with you and integrate their ideas?