

BRIDGING THE GAP ISLINGTON

Matching Policy and Process

1. Introduction

This document outlines the general matching process by Bridging the Gap Islington. A matching process helps to match suitable mentors to mentees and vice versa. It also advises what to do if matching doesn't work out.

For matching to be effective the coordinator must ensure that the needs and preferences of the service user are taken into consideration as well as those of the mentor. This is done by collecting information from relevant sources.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all employees, volunteers, and service users of Bridging the Gap Islington.

3. Sources from which to collect information

- Service user referral form
- Mentor expression of interest form
- Comments about the mentor made by interviewers
- Any additional verbal information passed on from referrer about service user
- Information about times that mentor and service user are available

4. The Matching Process

There is a matching guideline that the coordinator can look towards for guidance about matching mentors to mentees (see appendix a). The co-ordinator will use a matching record (see appendix b) to record a match between volunteer mentor and service user and will then seek confirmation and comments from another member of the steering committee or experienced supervisor.

Once a match has been approved in principle:

The co-ordinator will identify a supervisor for the partnership.

The possible mentor will be asked whether they would like to mentor the service user and provided with information about the service user, including their referral form.

If the mentor agrees to the match, then the service user will be asked whether they would like to be mentored by the prospective mentor. The service user will be provided with information about the prospective mentor, including their application form (but without any contact details). Though, if the service user prefers to meet the mentor without seeing documents, this is also acceptable.

If both mentor and service user agree, an initial meeting will be arranged to include, service user, mentor and the supervisor for the partnership.

Both mentor and service user will be informed that they can decide not to continue beyond an initial meeting. However, most initial meetings result in a continuing partnership. Where there appears to be any hesitation on the part of either mentor or service user, the supervisor should ask them to confirm, after the initial meeting, whether they wish to continue.

5. Guidelines for matches that don't work out

i) If the mentor is not sure they want to mentor the service user that is matched to them, the supervisor or the co-ordinator will

find out whether they are still interested in mentoring

check their preferences so that any future match can be more successful

ii) Service User –If the service user does not want to meet the potential mentor the supervisor or the co-ordinator will

find out whether they do not want to be mentored or whether they would prefer another mentor.

it is worth checking their preferences so that a second match can be more successful.

contact the mentor and inform them) that the match is not going to work out

(being careful to reassure them that is it not personal.

iii) Once an initial meeting has been arranged. It might be difficult for either party to back out if they do not feel comfortable with eachother.

If it appears that either mentor or service user are unsure about the partnership, then the supervisor should offer to cancel further meetings – providing some practical excuse such as illness or work commitments to avoid either party feeling rejected.

6. Approval

Approved: 17/4/18

To be reviewed: April 2020

Version 2

APS Key area 4

Appendix A

BRIDGING THE GAP ISLINGTON

Matching Guidelines

1. Introduction

Matching guidelines are used as part of the matching process (see matching process policy). Matching guidelines enables Bridging the Gap Islington to consider the needs of the service user and well as the needs and skill set of the volunteer mentor, to ensure appropriate and successful mentoring partnerships.

2. Scope

These guidelines apply to all employees, volunteers, and service users of Bridging the Gap Islington.

3. Guidelines

a) Service user preferences

Has the service user expressed a preference in relation to their potential matched volunteer,

b) Mentor preferences

Has the volunteer expressed a preference? (e.g. gender, lower/higher risk offender).

c) Background

Does the Volunteer share similar background or experience with the service user? Do they have a shared experience of other cultures?

d) Interests/hobbies

Does the Volunteer share similar interests with the Service user e.g. leisure activities, current affairs, music?

e) Questions about preferences. Do the preferences of service user or mentor appear to be unjustified or based on prejudice? If so, is there a way of encouraging a change of view?

f) Accessibility issues

Do service users or volunteers have any special needs e.g. service users with high mobility needs may have difficulties in travelling and will need to be matched with a volunteer who can travel to a suitable location?

g) Service user's needs

Are the skills and experience provided by the volunteer suitable for the needs of the service user. Is the Volunteer confident in working with the service user's needs? Can any relevant training or advice be provided?

h) Unusual Behaviour

Does the service user have any behaviour or habits that might be unusual or disconcerting? Will the volunteer be able to work with this behaviour accepting it or challenging it as appropriate? Ask the volunteer how confident they might feel and what could be done to assist them?

j) Location

Consider the location of Volunteers and Service users. Is matching likely to be restricted by geographical area or location? Is the volunteer willing to travel? The cost element of extensive travel will also need to be considered. Can it be managed within the project budget?

Appendix B

BRIDGING THE GAP ISLINGTON

Matching Record

Service User.....

Date.....

Mentor.....

1. Service users preferences about their mentor	
2. Mentor preferences about the person they mentor	
3. Background – Service user	
Background - mentor	
4. Interests/hobbies - Service user	
Interests/hobbies - mentor	
5. Questions about preferences How to change if unjustified? -	
6. Accessibility – any restrictions on possible venues?	
7. Service user's needs	
8. Unusual behaviour that mentor should know about	
9. Location for initial meeting	

Drafted by

Agreed by

Result