Learning Pathways
Certificate in Community Engagement and Personal Development

Finding your accountability partners

As a Learning Pathways (LP) student you are asked to select ‘someone who you respect and trust’ to be your accountability partner on your LP journey. It is an important role as the goal is to assist you to become a more effective learner and help you to improve in your work in personal development and community engagement.

This document is aimed at helping you choose the person who you think could be of most help to you during your learning journey. Please make a conscious choice.

The accountability partner should help you:

♦ To be honest with yourself
♦ To ensure you’re sticking to the goals and actions you decided to pursue
♦ To revisit your goals and strategies occasionally to make sure you’re on track
♦ To keep a wide perspective
♦ To identify your strengths and weaknesses and help you work with both
♦ To consider the next stage in your development
♦ To find new meaning in your work and reflections

Your accountability partner:

◊ Doesn’t need to be an expert or highly qualified but if the person has some basic understanding of Personal Development or Community Engagement, it is helpful
◊ Could be an experienced colleague, friend or member of staff
◊ Should be a trusted advisor, someone you can go to for guidance
◊ Must be committed to keeping you accountable
◊ Ideally should be available for approximately one hour every week during your LP journey
◊ Is there to help and encourage you to stay on track and achieve your goals
◊ Should not be your line manager

When you are in ministry, it is a good thing for you to have someone to share with, someone who doesn’t have any authority over you but who is a peer walking alongside you, supporting you, praying with you and giving advice. This is what the accountability partner should be for you.

What does the accountability partner do?

The role of the accountability partner is to support learning, ensuring work has been done on time and that sufficient effort/attention has been given to responsibilities in question. Key tasks involve:

▪ Respecting the confidentiality of the relationship
▪ Building a positive environment for learning
- Using questions (especially open questions) to probe and analyse progress and encourage reflection
- Letting the student work out his/her own solutions
- Helping the student to reflect on their strengths and weaknesses
- Giving constructive feedback and encouragement
- Sharing mutual respect and learning from each other
- Setting agreed goals and actions
- Being supportive to the student’s needs
- Using active listening
- Reading the work received and giving brief comments
- Discussing and reviewing personal goals and deadlines
- Providing ongoing informal support, guidance and advice
- Setting aside time to meet the student regularly (once a week is usually a good routine) at mutually convenient times and locations
- Signing off on the work to ensure it is done on time and as requested

For this relationship to be effective, the student must:

- Make a real effort to complete each piece of work on time
- Set aside time to prepare and write-up their personal development journal
- Send the accountability partner regular updates on their progress
- Be ready for their work to be signed off at the agreed time and meeting

It is the role of the accountability partner to help you to achieve your goals and develop yourself. This is best done by:

- Enabling you to learn by doing
- Creating a culture where learning becomes a ‘way of life’
- Developing skills of reflection
- Building on the community engagement processes
- Focusing on solutions, not problems
- Encouraging deeper relationships between people

Having the right accountability partner is important for the learning journey. The Territorial LP Coordinator can help in case it is needed. Once a person is found, the name and contact details should be added to the Personal Development and Community Engagement.