

Minds Ahead

Minds Ahead uniquely approach mental health from a school and college perspective. As a national social enterprise, we work with forward-thinking colleges, schools, universities, think tanks, charities, local authorities, strategic partners and influential leaders for the benefit of all students. We devise and run a range of accredited mental health qualifications for schools and colleges.

Introduction

Mental health peer mentoring is integral to whole college / school approaches to supporting student welfare, mental health and wellbeing, yet one that is not always given the priority and recognition it deserves.

A new qualification, delivered by staff, to boost peer-mentoring in your setting.

There are few qualifications for peer mentoring, the Minds Ahead Level 2 Mental Health Peer Mentor programme addresses this. It is accredited by the Royal Society for Public Health, which ensures credibility and recognition for this qualification.

It is suitable for all sixteen to eighteen year olds studying in schools and colleges who are interested in and able to support the mental health and wellbeing of their peers. They will gain a qualification in this widely recognized and transferrable skill. It will be delivered by existing staff enabling more students to access this qualification and to fit it around your existing context.

Benefits to students, staff, colleges and schools

Students are often the first source of support for their peers and many students want to know how to appropriately support others.

The benefits of the Mental Health Peer Mentor programme include:

- A cohort of trained and qualified mental health peer mentors who can support their peers by carefully listening, skilfully questioning, offering advice and guidance and signposting their peers to further support when required
- A safe space for students to discuss mental health problems, challenges and difficult emotions with someone their own age
- Qualified peer mentors who increase their self-esteem, confidence and wellbeing, through helping other people
- Qualified peer mentors who develop and refine their communication and interpersonal skills and who will gain insights into a career in counselling, coaching and mentoring and have highly transferrable skills for their future education and workplaces
- A qualification that will boost UCAS or job applications, demonstrating leadership, a commitment to volunteering and a willingness to help other people
- Staff delivering the programme who develop their own knowledge, skills, resources and confidence in supporting student mental health
- Colleges and schools who extend the range of support available to the student population and by doing so help to destigmatize mental health difficulties

Course learning objectives

By taking this course, students will be able to:

- ✪ Appreciate that mental health and wellbeing fluctuates
- ✪ Know how to protect good mental health for themselves and their peers
- ✪ Recognise the signs and symptoms of poor or declining mental health in themselves and their peers
- ✪ Support their own mental health in challenging, stressful or changing situations by applying strategies associated with self-leadership and emotional resilience
- ✪ Apply a range of listening, questioning and other mentoring skills, when supporting the mental health and wellbeing of peers

Course modules

Module 1: Understanding the signs of poor or declining mental health in yourself and your peers

Module 2: Self-leadership and emotional resilience to support your own and your peers' mental health and wellbeing

Module 3: Developing mentoring skills to support the mental health and wellbeing of peers

Delivery and assessment of the programme

The course will be delivered by existing staff working in schools and colleges (e.g. pastoral tutors, mental health leads, teachers), who will undertake a 'train-the-trainer' style induction with a member of staff at Minds Ahead. These should be experienced staff with some experience of supporting mental health and wellbeing of pupils.

Once staff have been approved to deliver the course, they will be given:

- training materials
- delivery notes, ideas and suggestions
- an assessment booklet to give to students, who will complete this and submit online to Minds Ahead for marking

Staff can adjust the training materials (e.g. add, omit, amend) but they have been designed to address all assessment criteria, so it is not advised that staff make too many changes.

Students will be required to attend at least three hours of synchronous webinars or face to face contact for each of the three modules, in a format decided by the school or college delivering the programme (e.g. a 3 hour face to face training session, or 3 x 1 hour webinars). Therefore it is recommended you take nine one hour lessons (over 1 term) to complete this qualification with your students.

For each module participants will also be expected to undertake approximately 3 to 4 hours of guided research and independent study.

The cost of the qualification will be £95 per student which includes the materials (sent electronically) training for the staff delivering this programme and the marking, online support the staff may need as delivering and marking by Minds Ahead.

To take the first step and sign up your students to this opportunity please send an email to

info@mindsahead.org.uk

*Great materials partnered by Minds Ahead , really seeing national changes since we have made this high on the agenda. So glad that to be embedding and driving this forward within the region
- Emma Wilson-Downes, Assistant HT*