Coaching for Warwick Doctoral Supervisors

An opportunity to reflect, develop and strengthen your supervisory practice

Doctoral supervision is a complex and evolving professional practice. Every supervisory relationship is different, and even experienced supervisors encounter situations that prompt them to reflect on their approach, assumptions and decisions.

This Warwick pilot offers doctoral supervisors dedicated time and confidential space to explore their supervisory practice, consider different perspectives and identify how they would like to develop in their role. It will also help Warwick learn whether coaching is a useful form of support for reflective supervision practice.

Through this University of Warwick initiative, a limited number of doctoral supervisors will have access to three individual coaching sessions with Dr Katy R Mahoney, Executive Coach and Researcher Development Specialist.

What might you explore?

Your coaching conversations are shaped by you and what matters most in your supervisory role. For example, you might want to explore:

Navigating challenging supervisory relationships or conversations.

Managing expectations, responsibilities and boundaries.

Supporting doctoral researchers to develop confidence, independence and ownership of their research.

Reflecting on your approach to supervision and how it may need to adapt to different researchers.

Considering how to support postgraduate researchers with different needs, experiences and circumstances.

Building confidence in your judgement, decisions and supervisory practice.

These are examples, not a prescribed coaching curriculum. You decide what you want to focus on.

What is coaching?

Coaching is a confidential, collaborative and non-directive process that creates space to reflect, explore different perspectives and identify your own solutions.

Rather than providing advice or telling you how to supervise, your coach works alongside you, using questions, reflection and constructive challenge to help you develop your thinking and determine your next steps.

You do not need to arrive with a fully developed goal or a particular problem to solve.

What does the programme involve?

Participants will receive three individual 60-minute coaching sessions, providing opportunities to reflect on their supervisory practice, explore current priorities and consider what they want to take forward between sessions.

Taking part also means attending one programme focus group (lasting no more than two hours) and completing an evaluation and reflection document, likely through an online form. All three elements are part of the commitment to this pilot.

Individual coaching conversations are confidential, subject to the professional and legal exceptions in the coaching agreement. The focus group and evaluation will gather feedback on the experience and potential value of the programme; participants will not be expected to disclose the content of their individual coaching conversations.

Before deciding to participate, please review the accompanying "Ready, Willing and Able to Engage in Coaching" self-reflection document. It can help you consider whether you are ready, willing and able to commit to coaching at this time. This is for your own reflection; it is not an application form, and you do not need to return it.

About your coach

Dr Katy R Mahoney is an experienced executive coach and researcher development specialist with over 20 years' experience working in higher education. She will deliver the coaching as part of her University of Warwick role.

Timelines

Application for place via this form. To be received by 15th December. **Applications are on a first come first served process with a commitment to attend all sessions and engage in feedback reporting,**

Participants sign agreements and book through Calendly: 15th December 2026 - 22th January 2027

Suggestions timelines for coaching sessions

Coaching session 1: 25th January 2027 – 19th February 2027

Coaching session 2: 8th March 2027 – 2nd April 2027

Coaching session 3: 19th April 2027 – 7th May 2027

Evaluation and feedback collection: 10th –24th May

Focus Group May/ June

What previous academic clients say about coaching

"I've made concrete progress towards a promotion which was a goal coming in. I've gained tools to help with productivity, decision making and management which have helped to streamline workflows and remove barriers from completing tasks"

"I have determined a preliminary road map for my trajectory. I have learned to be a bit kinder to myself, and perhaps to enjoy the moment more and have gratitude for that moment. I am learning to focus on things that I can control and what I am great at, and all other things - I delegate. This assists me with managing my anxiety."

"One of my favourite approaches that Katie helped me with was to purposely delay a decision about something - specifically to not think about something until a certain point of time. that kind of approach I think is very helpful for some of us who are inclined to overthink or overanalyse, so to say, hey I can't actually think about this until certain information is known is really helpful. I'm already using this approaching other decisions. Also, the can-do spirit Katie showed of breaking down bigger tasks into smaller tasks that I could be accountable for is helpful and something I will use in other tasks as well."

Websites

https://www.researchercoaching.com/for-researchers/coaching/

https://www.researchercoaching.com/for-researchers/what-is-the-difference-between-coaching-mentoring-and-counselling/