INTRODUCTION TO HEAD OF DEPARTMENT
What makes an effective head of department? It is a pivotal role in any higher education institution, but what do you have to know and do? Introduction to Head of Department gives you the opportunity to explore the knowledge, and skills required; and to undertake diagnostics that will help you identify your personal style of leadership. IHoD is all about introducing you to the tools, skills and techniques to become an effective and successfull head of department.

About IHoD

IHoD will take you through the contemporary contexts and challenges of being a head of department. It is a short but intense programme that will give you a clear sense of what you need to hit the ground running, providing an effective foundation for those aspiring to or new to the role.

IHoD is grounded in the strategic issues and choices that institutions are currently facing, and at the same time giving you practical leadership preparation for new, aspiring or returning heads of departments.

Participants will leave this programme with a much better understanding of the latest survival skills that they need to do a really good job, based upon the current contexts of higher education.

Who is IHoD for?

You could be contemplating whether a head of department role is right for you. Or you could have already been appointed to such a role and are waiting to begin.

This programme has also been developed to support those returning to a head of department role after a break or time in another role within their university or higher education college. You may be from an academic or professional background and be anticipating leading an academic or support function.

IHoD is about quickly getting aspirant, new, or returning heads of departments into leadership mode so they can deliver effectively in their new role. It will cover the issues that you need to sharpen your skills, focusing for example on issues such as conflict management and building internal networks. There will be opportunities to discuss your own change challenges.

Programme objectives

By the end of the programme participants will have had an opportunity to:

- Review the changing face of higher education throughout the UK and how these changes are affecting HEIs
- Explore the role of head of department in its various guises
- Identify your conflict mode preferences and develop strategies for difficult conversations
- Raise your awareness of different leadership styles
- Explore the nature of change and models for implementation
- Discuss a change or conflict scenario and work on strategies for addressing it
- Work in small groups to discuss specific leadership issues and plan actions to address these
- Share experiences and ideas with a set of fellow-leaders from across the UK
- Develop your self-awareness and confidence as a leader

Special features

- Look at the nature of change and discuss models for implementing your own change project
- Managing difficult conversations
- Reviewing conflict using the Thomas Kilman conflict mode tool
- Guest presentations from experienced heads of departments
- Action learning sets
- Diagnostics on management and leadership style
Programme structure
Over two programme days and one action learning-set day delegates will develop their knowledge and skills in the leadership of people and the management of change. The programme includes case studies, diagnostics, individual and small group work, and plenary exercises.

Participants are invited to prepare a change or conflict scenario to be worked-on during the programme and to identify their individual and institutional learning objectives in relation to the programme.

Programme director
Ginnie Willis
Ginnie is the programme director for four key Leadership Foundation open programmes: Senior Strategic Leadership, Leading Departments, Introduction to Head of Department and Aurora. She is the national co-ordinator for Scotland, represents the Leadership Foundation on a number of UK-wide committees, and has provided in-house consultancy on a range of topics for a number of higher education institutions.

Ginnie is qualified to administer a number of diagnostic tools (including the Transformational Leadership Questionnaire), which are key components of many programmes.

Find out more
Still not sure if this programme is for you? Talk to Ginnie.
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E: ginnie.willis@lfhe.ac.uk

How to book
The dates for future runs of IHoD, along with deadlines and booking conditions can be found online at www.lfhe.ac.uk/ihod

If you would like more information about IHoD contact the programme coordinator:
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“The course significantly improved my confidence and my ability to take on the role of a head of department. I had been very dubious about it beforehand, but both the facilitators and the participants taught me a lot about my strengths and about the role.”

Professor Kirstein Rummery,
Chair in Social Policy, University of Stirling
What they say about Introduction to Head of Department:

“The Introduction to Head of Department programme helped me think more carefully about my own leadership style and how I apply it in the workplace. I found it extremely valuable to discuss leadership development with a number of like-minded colleagues.”

IHoD past participant

“An excellent opportunity to develop new skills and meet colleagues from a wide range of backgrounds with similar experiences and developmental needs.”

Dr Gordon Munro, Head of Undergraduate Programmes, Royal Conservatoire of Scotland

“I believe it opened my eyes with regards to the scope and ambition of the role. Definitely recommended.”

IHoD past participant

“I have achieved a much better insight into my leadership style and received useful pointers of how to improve it.”

Professor Thomas Krauss, Head of School of Physics and Astronomy, University of St Andrews

“This was a very intense 2 day programme but was very worthwhile as it covered a number of topics that were of immediate relevance in my managerial role.”

IHoD past participant