



Supporting Leaders in Training: Leadership Qualification Mentors

Introduction

Thank you for volunteering to mentor a Leader in Training. Developing Leaders helps to grow guiding and gives more girls the opportunity to be involved. We hope you will enjoy the role and find it rewarding!

In this document you will find information on:

- the Leadership Qualification (LQ)
- the Mentor's role
- support for Mentors
- what's next
- the mentoring process.

As a Leadership Qualification Mentor you may be mentoring any of the following:

- new Leaders in Training (undertaking LQ Modules 1 to 3 or 1 to 4)
- Leaders changing sections (LQ Module 1 only)
- Assistant Leaders under the age of 65 becoming Unit Leaders (LQ Module 4 only)
- qualified Young Leaders who are now moving on to the Leadership Qualification

The term 'Leader in Training' is used throughout this resource to refer to any of the above.

The Leadership Qualification

The Leadership Qualification promotes good guiding practice, is competency based and reflects what happens in an effective unit with a balanced programme. It is a practical qualification which enables participants to take an active part in the effective running of a unit using the Guiding Method, so that everyone in the unit can enjoy and get the most from guiding.

The Leadership Qualification contains four modules. Every Leader undertakes Modules 1 to 3. As many eligible members of the Leadership Team as possible may complete Module 4, in order to support the administration and management of the unit.

- Module 1: Your role in the programme.
- Module 2: Your role in Girlguiding.
- Module 3: Your role in safety and unit administration.
- Module 4: Your role in managing the unit.

You should familiarise yourself with the Leadership Qualification workbook, including the introduction which contains essential guidance. A useful checklist for the LQ is available on www.girlguiding.org.uk > Members' area > Guiding roles > Mentors.

Leaders come to their guiding roles with all kinds of different knowledge, skills and experience. While the qualification can take just six months (two terms) to complete, it often takes longer, so don't worry if the person you are mentoring takes more or less time. This will vary according to skills, experience and external factors.

Young Leaders undertaking the Leadership Qualification

The Young Leader Qualification (YLQ) covers a significant amount of Modules 1 and 2 of the Leadership Qualification. A downloadable chart showing which areas the Young Leader Qualification covers may be found at www.girlguiding.org.uk > Members' area > Learning and development > Becoming a Leader > Young Leader Qualification or on The Senior Section CD.

If you are a Mentor working with a Young Leader who has achieved her YLQ, you will need to have a copy of this document and should then sign off the work already covered before helping the Leader in Training to cover the rest of the qualification.

All 14- to 16-year-olds doing the Young Leader Qualification are supported within their unit by their Unit Leader. They may choose to remain Young Leaders until the age of 18 although they can start the Leadership Qualification at 16. On Go! Young Leaders undertaking the Leadership Qualification are recorded with the role 'Young Leader LQ' until their 18th birthday. If they complete the Leadership Qualification before turning 18, their role will be updated to 'Leader' on their 18th birthday.

A special note on students and transfers

If you are mentoring someone who will be moving or has moved from one guiding area to another, for example a student, it's important to make sure they are able to make a smooth transition and continue with their Leadership Qualification in their new area if they wish.

If they are planning on moving from your area:

- ensure all relevant clauses in their LQ book are signed off before they move
- Ensure they have their Go! membership number, which is unique to them and can be passed on to their new unit when they transfer, so their guiding record is not lost
- Encourage them to contact guiding in their new area to help them find a unit when they are ready:

If they have moved to your area, recognise and congratulate them on what has been signed off already (clauses do not need to be repeated because the Leader has moved to a new area). Offer support and guidance to help them to fill in the gaps to complete their LQ. Students may have different term dates or need time out to focus on studies - so they may not be able to attend every meeting. However it is important that the time they are able to give is recognised and valued and adopting a flexible approach which enables them to complete the qualification as and when they are able to is very important.

The Mentor's role

A Girlguiding LQ Mentor:

- promotes the aims and principles of Girlguiding
- understands the Leadership Qualification and process
- has current or recent experience as a Girlguiding Leader
- is a good listener and a good communicator
- is flexible and open-minded
- is aware and accepts that everyone is an individual

- suggests possibilities and options to the Leader in Training, rather than trying to impose her own ideas and methods
- understands the importance of keeping discussions confidential when necessary
- knows when and where to get help

Each Mentor will bring her own style, experience and attributes to the role.

There are many aspects to the Mentor's role. Once you are matched with a Leader in Training, you will be given her contact details and Leadership Qualification workbook. Then it is up to you to contact your Leader in Training and get started! You will support your Leader in Training through the qualification and decide when she is qualified. You need to keep your County's Leadership Qualification Coordinator informed of which modules she is undertaking and her progress on these modules.

Your Go! record will be updated with the role of Mentor, if you do not already hold this role. You can find the up-to-date contact details for your Leader in Training using the 'My Mentoring Information' report, in the Update Details area of Go!.

Starting out

- Think flexibly about location for your first meeting - you could meet in a coffee shop or perhaps in your Leader in Training's unit meeting place before or after her meeting.
- Build a rapport with the Leader in Training. Encourage her to share her guiding experiences and tell you about herself and her unit.
- Help the Leader in Training to understand her role and what is expected of her.
- Value the skills, interests and experience that she brings to the role.
- Help your Leader in Training to feel welcomed and part of a team, and encourage her to participate in local guiding.
- Read the clauses of the LQ carefully and know what is required. Don't ask for anything extra - it's not about jumping through hoops!

Working through the LQ

- Visit the Leader in Training's unit or arrange for someone else to do so. The unit visit is important as it will help you (or another experienced Leader/Mentor chosen by you) to observe the Leader in Training's rapport with the age group and her practical guiding skills. She doesn't need to run the whole meeting.
- Work with the Unit Leader to ensure that the Leader in Training has the opportunities she needs.
- Help the Leader in Training to reflect on and learn from her experiences, for example considering why activities did or didn't work well.
- Be available as a sounding board and give constructive feedback, remembering that you are both volunteers.
- Contact the Leader in Training's County training team to find out about relevant opportunities for her. Find a suitable programme training for your Leader in Training to attend and help her to get 1st Response (or equivalent) training.
- Encourage others to help sign off areas of the LQ, where possible. Aim to have the workbook signed off by people in a range of roles.

- As modules are completed, inform the Leadership Qualification Coordinator who will mark them as completed on the individual's Go! record.

Communication

- Stay in regular contact with the Leader in Training to maintain support and enthusiasm, at least every half term of unit guiding.
- Ask relevant questions to help the Leader in Training develop her own understanding and confidence.
- Read between the lines - look out for body language, and listen to what is and also what is not said!
- Pass on all necessary communication and correspondence promptly. Introduce yourself to the Unit Leader and the local Commissioner (if you don't already know them). Keep them informed as appropriate on the Leader in Training's progress and any relevant difficulties or opportunities required for her and her unit. It may be very useful to invite the Unit Leader to one of your mentoring meetings.
- Remember that Leaders in Training, whether new to guiding or previously involved, may be confused by jargon. Try not to use jargon but if you do, make sure you explain it!

Things to remember

- Guiding is fun - don't get too caught up in paperwork. As long as the Five Essentials are in place and the girls are safe and enjoying themselves, it is good guiding.
- Think flexibly - being flexible helps Leaders to enjoy their guiding while honouring their other commitments. See Girlguiding's website and 'Flexible Guiding, Have You Thought Of...?' (www.girlguiding.org.uk > Members' area > Resource library > Growing guiding resources > Flexible guiding).
- Stay up-to-date with local and Girlguiding priorities and procedures by reading *guiding* magazine and e-newsletters and visiting the website on a regular basis.
- Ensure that the Leader in Training knows what is on offer for the next steps in her guiding journey once she has completed the LQ. Look at Girlguiding's website for inspiration: www.girlguiding.org.uk > Members' area > Learning and development. There is space to record further learning completed in the LQ workbook.

Everyone in local guiding has a part to play in welcoming the new Leader to the team, helping her to settle in and supporting her. Many of these people can also help the Leader in Training or Young Leader on the Leadership Qualification by signing off clauses where relevant.

Mentor

- Supports Leader in Training through the LQ.
- Identifies existing skills and experience.
- Visits unit, or delegates this.
- Helps identify areas for development.
- Helps access relevant training and other learning opportunities.
- Signs off modules when completed and notifies Leadership Qualification Coordinator.
- Signs off completed LQ and sends to Verifier.
- Notifies local Commissioner when LQ is complete.

Leadership Qualification Coordinator

- Regularly reviews Go! reports to monitor progress and new starters.
- Matches Leaders in Training with Mentors.
- Often issues LQ pack to Mentor.
- Monitors timescales using Go! reports.
- Supports Mentors.
- Helps if there are issues to be addressed.

Local Commissioner

- Completes Join Us and recruitment checks.
- Welcomes new Leader to local guiding and to meetings.
- Offer support if there are issues, and answers questions/concerns.
- Keeps in touch.
- Keeps an eye on timescales and the 'valid to' dates of roles.
- Helps access resources/trainings.
- Can sign off parts of modules.
- Updates new Leader's role on Go! when the LQ is completed. NB: this is only done once the individual turns 18.

Verifier

- Checks completed LQ to verify work of Mentor.
- Gives constructive feedback to Mentor.

Unit Leader/s

- Welcomes Leader in Training to team.
- Involves her in the unit and in planning and running the programme.
- Gives opportunities to cover requirements of the LQ.
- Gives guidance where needed.
- Can sign off parts of modules.
- Flags up any concerns to Mentor/Leadership Qualification Coordinator/local Commissioner.
- Helps access resources/trainings.

Go! Coordinator

- Regularly provides Leadership Qualification Coordinator with relevant reports from County Go! to monitor progress of Leaders in Training (or the Leadership Qualification Coordinator can also run them herself on Go!).
- Updates information on County Go! as requested by Leadership Qualification Coordinator.

Girls and parents

- Can sign off parts of modules where appropriate.

Local area team

- Supports and welcomes Leader in Training.
- Can sign off parts of the modules.

Flexible mentoring

If you are mentoring several Leaders in Training this gives them all a ready-made peer and support group, so do have socials with them all together! It will also be worth allowing time for the occasional one-to-one check-in.

Case study: Coffee shop mentoring

'I was asked to mentor three people from the same District - one was Guides, one was Brownies and one was both. I set up a monthly meeting at a local coffee shop so they could each drop in if they wanted to go through their LQ - they all turned up every month! Group mentoring worked really well; for example in discussing the Five Essentials, they could all give examples of what happens in their unit and encourage the others and I just steered the conversation as needed. They all signed off lots of elements in each other's workbooks and built up a really strong guiding relationship from doing this outside the unit meeting place.'

Jo, Leadership Qualification Mentor, Girlguiding London South West

Keeping in touch

Keeping in touch will give your Leader in Training an opportunity to tell you how things are going, raise any concerns or needs and ask questions. The level of support and personal contact required will depend very much on the Leader in Training.

To begin with it may be better to meet fairly frequently for a short time, and in person where possible. As you continue working together, keep in regular contact through email, text, telephone and face-to-face meetings as required.

Read over the checklist on pages 11-12 for hints on what to cover and consider in your initial contact and meetings.

Be aware that the Leader may ask questions which aren't connected to the Leadership Qualification. Don't worry if you don't know the answer to a question, but point her in the direction of someone who does or get an answer for her as appropriate.

Action plan

Once you have got to know your Leader in Training, you can begin to set goals and sign off sections of the Leadership Qualification.

There is a range of systems that your Leader in Training could use to plan and monitor her progress. Some examples are:

- a simple list of what she is planning to achieve, in small steps, together with the date she expects to complete each step
- the checklist in the back of the LQ workbook, with target dates and activities written in and things crossed off as they are achieved
- targets written on the personal action plan in the Leadership Qualification workbook

The Leader in Training should make her own choice of method. Help her to plan a way forward that suits her.

When creating an action plan, keep the following in mind.

1. Identify which modules need to be covered - modules and parts can be completed in any order.

2. Consider previous experience and accredit prior learning. Sign off anything that can be covered by discussion immediately.
3. Identify events or activities planned in the unit, District, Division and County which she can get involved with and can count towards her LQ.
4. Help the Leader in Training to identify which elements and achievements can be combined and counted in more than one area of the qualification.
5. Evidence - talk about types and examples - keep it simple!
6. Who can help carry out the action plan or sign the workbook? Encourage a range of people to sign off, particularly the unit's Leadership Team and the girls.
7. Help your Leader in Training to identify dates for trainings, such as section trainings or 1st Response. Know where to obtain information about suitable trainings, eg from a local calendar or County newsletter, or by liaising with the Leadership Qualification Coordinator or local Commissioner.
8. Schedule your unit visit - if necessary, contact the Unit Leader to help arrange this. You may need to ask the Leadership Qualification Coordinator, local Commissioner or another Mentor to do this visit if you are unable to do it yourself.
9. Make sure the plan is realistic and flexible, taking into account the Leader in Training's commitments and available time. Together, establish a comfortable plan of action which suits her pace.
10. Ensure that you build in some time for reflection. This helps the Leader in Training to develop and learn.

Evidence

Review the evidence guidelines in the LQ workbook with your Leader in Training. Let her know that simple and original is best, and sometimes less is best! Ideally all the evidence will fit into the plastic wallet supplied with the Leadership Qualification. Many of the requirements will be covered by observation and discussion.

- Use the workbook to jot down notes of discussions and the folder to store any extra documents.
- Evidence does not need to be typed, written up or formally presented. Scribbled notes, original documents or digital evidence (eg photos of activities, copies of emails) are sufficient.
- Use questions and discussion to provide or to expand on written evidence - bullet points noted in the workbook are fine.
- Often, a piece of evidence can be used to cover more than one part of the Leadership Qualification.
- Each piece of additional evidence should be clearly marked with the part(s) of the LQ (module, number and letter) that it relates to - for example District meeting minutes would be evidence for Module 2 Part 2a.

Signing off sections

Where possible, sign off sections of the LQ right at the start, reflecting the Leader in Training's prior knowledge and experience.

Encourage her to get a variety of people to sign the different parts where appropriate.

Anyone who has worked with her, observed her or discussed it with her can sign to say she has completed a clause - the Unit Leader, her Commissioner, girls, parents, even Leaders she knows in other parts of the country.

As a Mentor, only you can sign off the completion of the modules (on page 39 of the workbook) and the Leadership Qualification itself.

Completion of the LQ

Check that all parts of the relevant modules are completed and then sign off the LQ workbook. Ensure that the Leader in Training has written her name, address, registration number and unit number on the workbook.

Next, send the LQ workbook and evidence to your Leadership Qualification Coordinator and inform the Leader in Training's local Commissioner. The Leader in Training has now completed the qualification and the Commissioner or her representative will update her record on Go!.

The newly qualified Leader will then be presented with her Leadership Qualification certificate and badge at a suitable place and time.

Verification

The Verifier's role is to ensure that a consistent standard of mentoring is maintained throughout the County. The Leader in Training's qualification is already gained regardless of the outcome of verification. The Verifier may contact you to give you some constructive feedback on your mentoring.

Support for Mentors

Support is available from a range of sources. Remember, you don't need to have all the answers, just know where to ask!

1. The Leadership Qualification workbook: contains useful information, such as safety checklists and a grid to record how the Five Essentials have been covered over a term.
2. Local guiding members, eg your Commissioner, Advisers, Administrator, other Leaders and Mentors can all help.
3. Publications: Girlguiding has a range of publications that can support you. Many can be bought at your local depot or from Trading Service (call 0161 941 2237 or visit www.girlguidingukshop.co.uk) while others can be downloaded from the members' area of www.girlguiding.org.uk.
4. Trainings/adult support sessions: these can be especially useful if you are mentoring out of your section.
5. County information sources, eg calendars, websites or newsletters, are helpful.
6. Friends and family can be a great source of moral and practical support.

You may need to claim expenses from time to time in your role as Mentor. Check with your Leadership Qualification Coordinator about expenses and how to claim.

Online learning

If you'd like to develop or brush up on your mentoring skills, try Girlguiding's fun and interactive online learning module on mentoring:
www.girlguiding.org.uk/elearning.

Completion is recognised with a certificate.

Special needs

Leaders in Training with special needs should be offered the support they need to complete the LQ within their skills and capabilities.

Discuss any support needs with your Leader in Training, as she will know best what support will be useful for her. Further support may be available from your local Commissioner or Special Needs Adviser.

If your Leader in Training has a special need which you are concerned may affect her role within the unit (and this has not been discussed with you and risk-managed prior to mentoring her), discuss this with her County Commissioner and Leadership Qualification Coordinator. The County Commissioner may need to undertake a risk assessment and possibly to place a restriction on her role; for example, when qualified, the new Leader must always work with another Leader in a unit setting. In this case, discuss this with the Leader in Training, so she knows what you are doing and is aware of the reasons for it.

What if there are issues?

It is important to help identify any issues early on, for the sake of both the Leader in Training and yourself.

There's a whole guiding team behind you, so don't feel alone! If you have concerns about your Leader in Training's progress, please talk to her local Commissioner, the County Adviser for Special Needs where appropriate, and/or the Leadership Qualification Coordinator - they are there to support you.

The task of mentoring a Leader in Training through the LQ is a voluntary, two-way partnership. If for any reason your mentoring relationship is not working out, do not hesitate to contact your Leadership Qualification Coordinator.

What's next?

Some people mentor several people through the Leadership Qualification and are happy for this to be part of their long-term contribution to guiding. Others undertake the role just once as they are a good match with an individual Leader in Training in their area. If you would like to mentor more Leaders in Training, let the Leadership Qualification Coordinator know. Alternatively, take a look on the Learning and Development pages on Girlguiding's website for other ways to develop your skills and support guiding: www.girlguiding.org.uk >Members' area > Learning and development.

Checklist: The mentoring process

This overview of the mentoring process is an example and may be adapted according to the needs of the Leader in Training.

Mentor assigned

The Mentor may be mentoring one-to-one, or with a group of Leaders in Training.

Initial contact between Mentor and Leader in Training (text/email/phone call/unit meeting)

- Aim to contact within two weeks to maintain enthusiasm.
- Do the introductions.
- Arrange initial meeting.

Initial meeting

- Agree roles/responsibilities - including ground rules for working together, eg keep to meeting times, and cancel in advance if necessary.
- Provide an overview of the LQ.
- Get to know each other.
- Find out about her guiding roles, background and previous experience.
- Identify next steps for the Leader in Training. Set goal(s) together for completion by the next meeting.
- Introduce the book at this or the following meeting (if you think this might be overwhelming, then wait till the second meeting).
- Look out for prior learning - can you sign off some parts of the Leadership Qualification straight away?
- Arrange the next meeting.

Next meeting

- Catch up on how the Leader in Training is finding her time in the unit.
- Review what's been done and sign things off as applicable.
- Encourage the Leader to use the workbook to record discussions and make notes.
- Determine and agree any learning needs.
- Plan what to do next - help the Leader to start an action plan.
- Agree what to do for next meeting.
- Get necessary trainings booked.
- Arrange next meeting/when you will contact each other next.

Subsequently

- Determine and agree any learning needs.
- As modules are completed, inform the Leadership Qualification Coordinator.
- Facilitate learning for the Leader in Training, by suggesting suitable forthcoming trainings or putting in a request with the training team if needed.
- Review notes on page 9 of the Leadership Qualification on what sort of evidence is needed (keep it simple and minimal).
- Ensure the Leader in Training knows what support is available and where to find it - eg other Leaders, local Commissioner, trainings, publications, website etc.
- Agree a date for the next meeting.
- Agree a date for the unit meeting visit.
- Arrange signing-off opportunities.
- Discuss what might be next on her guiding journey.