



Action Learning Set Brief:

Action Learning is a powerful development experience for leaders. It brings people together to exchange, support and challenge each other in action and learning.

BUFDG is partnering with ARMA, AUDE, CHEIA, HESPA, SCONUL, UCISA and UHR (our equivalent for professionals across the Research, Estates, Internal Audit, Strategic Planning, Libraries, IT and HR) to offer action learning to Finance staff at Deputy Director / Heads of Department or equivalent.

What is an Action Learning Set?

An Action Learning Set is a small, confidential forum where each participant brings to the meeting an organisational task, problem, challenge or opportunity on which they intend to act. Having presented the issue to the group, other participants pose questions and raise discussions which help the presenter create insight and options for action. A structured process, supported by a skilled facilitator, is used to ensure that everyone has personal 'air-time' as well as the opportunity to contribute to the learning of others. It is through the experience of taking action on return to the workplace that promotes reflection, learning and personal development. Given breadth of knowledge and wider HE understanding is a valuable development experience, these Action Learning Sets provide a fantastic opportunity to learn from others across the sector.

What are the benefits?

Our facilitator, Lesley Broughton, has outlined the benefits as follows:

- Input from other Deputy Directors / Heads of Department (or equivalent) in other roles who will challenge your thinking and offer a fresh perspective on organisational issues.
- Development of your active listening and questioning skills to help others gain insight – valuable skills that can be put to use in your normal working environment.
- Exposure to a variety of new and different challenges in other institutions which offers additional learning and a new perspective to broaden your scope of reference.
- Learning the challenges across other functions as your set will contain a mixture of disciplines.
- Consolidation of learning over a medium to long term period, rather than a one-off experience.
- A rare opportunity for time away from the office for deep thinking about pressing issues.
- Development of a trusted network of peers who normally continue to share thinking long after the formal 'end' of the action set series.

Who can join?

These Action Learning Sets are aimed at Deputy Director / Heads of Department level (or equivalent). The sets are being offered to aspiring leaders across the 8 associations to ensure a good mix of professions are represented in each. There will be 6 participants per set.

How much will it cost?

The rate will be £595 (excluding VAT) per candidate for the full set of 4 sessions.

This includes the venue, refreshments, and lunch costs at the first meeting in London. Thereafter the participants will host the sessions in turn at their own institutions, providing an appropriate room and refreshments.

When will the Action Learning Sets take place?

There will be 4 x 1-day sessions, held at 6-8-week intervals across an 8-month period. Many sets continue to meet on a 'self-managed' basis after the initial series of sessions have finalised. It is critical that candidates commit to attending all the dates within the set.

We have 3 proposed 'set' dates:

Set A. Tuesday 12th November, Tuesday 14th January, Tuesday 10th March, Tuesday 12th May

Set B. Tuesday 19th November, Tuesday 21st January, Tuesday 17th March, Tuesday 19th May

Set C. Thursday 21st November, Thursday 23rd January, Thursday 19th March, Thursday 21st May

We are hoping to run all three sets, but this will depend on levels of interest and a good mix of candidates for each set.

Where will the meetings take place?

The first meetings are scheduled to take place in London. After this, the participants will host the sessions in turn at their own institutions, providing a venue and refreshments. To reduce travel, we will try and group participants by broad geographical location where feasible.

How do I register interest?

Before we ask candidates to fully apply, we would like candidates to register their interest first. This will enable us to ensure we have a good mix of candidates before we confirm a set is taking place.

To register your interest, you will need to send an email to rachel@bufdg.ac.uk by **Friday 6th September**:

- Your current role / job title
- Which set you would be interested in attending i.e. Set A, B or C depending on your availability.
- That you can attend all the sessions within the set
- You have the support of your line / decision maker to partake in the set.

Once you have registered, Rachel McLone will confirm back if the set is taking place and for you to fully apply.

How do I fully apply?

Send an email to rachel@bufdg.ac.uk by **Friday 20th September** with the following information:

- A copy of your current CV.
- A personal statement explaining why you would like to participate and what you wish to gain from the programme.
- A supporting statement from your manager highlighting the benefits to you and the organisation from your participation in the Action Learning Set.
- Applications with missing information will not be considered.

(Statements should be no more than 250 words).

Should anyone wish to know more about the Action Learning Sets prior to applying, please email rachel@bufdg.ac.uk.

Just some of the feedback from delegates:

- *The most empowering self-reflection development I have undertaken*
- *The ALS gave me time and space to explore difficult issues confidentially*
- *Great atmosphere, really relaxed and informal*
- *I would recommend to anyone wanting a leadership development programme that really has impact and the ability to transform your working practice*
- *The ALS challenges you to approach a problem differently*
- *Insightful and thought provoking*
- *Chance to visit and learn about different institutions*
- *Greater understanding of what is important to other professional service colleagues*
- *I have extended my network beyond my discipline*
- *The ALS provided me with a safe space to explore and develop my thinking in relation to real day to day leadership challenges. It was dynamic, stimulating and hugely beneficial*
- *New perspectives and challenge from fellow leaders enabled me to further develop my own leadership capabilities*
- *This experience will stay with me as one of the significant to date in terms of my personal and professional development*
- *The best supportive network to reflect and challenge your thinking.*