

31-10-2024

Dear Meyler Campbell Community, Colleagues and Friends,

As I stand at the threshold of some interesting life changes, I'm writing this communication not as a goodbye (the wonderful Meyler Campbell Community embraces one for ever) but as a thank you for an amazing 13 years of fun, challenge, friendship and learning. I'm stepping down from my role as director of quality, standards and accreditation for the Mastered Programme. I was first introduced to the Business Coach Programme (as it was then called), by Anne Scoular in December 2006. We met at the opening of the first British Psychological Society Coaching Psychology Conference, held at City University, where I was pro-vice-chancellor (PVC) and professor of psychology. I had been invited to open the event and say a few words. My specialisms had previously related to health and counselling psychology, but during my time as PVC and Dean of the Health School it became enormously clear that I and others would likely be more effective in our roles and better able to create an environment in which everyone could flourish, if we focused on and enhanced our knowledge and skills in all those areas that we now see as having a home in coaching and coaching psychology - something that Anne Scoular had known and nurtured for years!

I completed the Business Coach (now Mastered Programme), whilst still at City, but not for a moment did I think that when I retired from there 13 years ago that I would have the enormous privilege and joy of not only becoming part of a wonderful community, but also part of a truly outstanding and supportive Faculty from whom I have learned so much.

A focus on quality, standards and accreditation is not one that immediately has appeal to professionals who just want to be able to get on with what they do so well. However, Anne, in her wisdom, knew that in the interests of those who completed Mastered and were finding their way in a high powered and competitive market, that these things are important, as is Meyler Campbell being recognized in the wider coaching and coaching psychology world as a quality organization offering a top-class programme. The quality has always been there but demonstrating this and making it widely known is critical and remains so. Also important is the openness to constant reflection and reviewing of all that we do to enhance it and to remain agile in a constantly changing market and social and political world.

Thus, the last 13 years have flown past and just as I hear said so often at graduation, I can honestly say that I wish I had 'known' or thought to apply earlier in my career, those things that I have learned or come to understand better during my time with Meyler Campbell.

It now feels very timely for me to step down from the standards and accreditation role and hand over the baton. During my years with Meyler Campbell its community, faculty, and fantastic administrative and support teams have grown considerably, diversified in many ways, including in its people and its spheres of activity, which include considerable philanthropic areas of activity. It has also supported and encouraged its faculty and graduates (often working collaboratively), in their completion of outstanding research and writing, much of which has been published in journals and books.

I have worked with three Meyler Campbell CEOs and have huge thanks and admiration for each of them. Anne - my inspiration, who found me and picked me up when I needed it! Catherine, who took over so seamlessly from Anne and nurtured us all through the very difficult Covid years, and Guy, whose boundless energy and creative thinking has left me with my head spinning with ideas and thoughts to continue working forever! And it is at this point that it feels right to move partially on. Meyler Campbell can create a role and appoint a person who is perfect for now and years to come as it expands and changes. I can create a role for myself that enables me to continue with my writing, my supervision offering and my work with the British Psychological Society. We now have a new route for Chartering as a Coaching Psychologist and the fledgling division and training route is at the stage where support and nurturing is both welcomed and needed.

I will also have more time for travels, large and small, with my husband and dogs, while we're fit enough to do it. With the help of a welfare van we will have room for ourselves, our dogs, husband's wheelchair and other paraphernalia, and also the occasional overnight stop on long journeys. We will leave the stripes on the back of the van to enhance safety!! If you're wondering what a welfare van is you can see some great examples on Autotrader. We're very excited about our new adventures and who knows, perhaps I'll capture them in a future book and somehow interweave them with the very many positive things I've learned whilst at Meyler Campbell and in my earlier psychology and leadership career. At the end of the day, all that we learn, and practice has huge personal application in life enhancing ways.

Finally, an enormous thank you to all of you. Mastered participants for so openly and trustingly engaging me in a journey of shared learning with you and faculty for welcoming me, supporting me, and patiently taking on board some of the less exciting elements of programme provision. Thank you too for the many brilliant professional development learning opportunities integrated so well within our faculty meetings and more widely within the community and last but not most importantly thank you to the administrative team. Never have I experienced such fantastic and high-quality support as I've witnessed and received from you all during the last 13 years.

Long may Meyler Campbell continue to flourish and through its work continue to enhance and enrich the lives of all those with whom it connects and who then go on to connect with others so that the ripples may spread yet further and further.

### **Prof Mary Watts**

Former Mastered Programme Director (quality, standards and accreditation)

Currently, obsessed with all things welfare van connected and the adventures it will bring.