

Teaching, Research & Academic Mentoring Scheme

Handbook



University of
St Andrews



University
of Dundee

A cross-institutional mentoring scheme

Contents

- 1 Welcome
- 1 What is mentoring?
- 2 What does this scheme involve?
- 3 Different developmental partnerships
– where does mentoring fit in?
- 4 Underlying principles of mentoring
- 6 Mentoring models and partnership roles
- 8 Mentoring agreements
- 10 Getting the most out of your mentoring meetings:
GROW and be SMART!
- 11 Overview of the partnership cycle
- 13 Key mentoring skills
- 15 Asking the right questions
- 18 Mentoring dilemmas
- 20 Further reading and resources
- 21 Occupational Health & Counselling services
- 22 Contacts

This handbook is intended as an ongoing reference for both mentors and mentees.

Welcome

To the *Teaching, Research & Academic Mentoring Scheme*

The highly successful cross-institutional mentoring scheme developed through collaboration between the University of St Andrews (OSDS) and the University of Dundee (OPD) has been running for over ten years. We are proud to now partner with Abertay University, Glasgow School of Art, the James Hutton Institute, Trinity College Dublin and Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh.

The *Teaching, Research & Academic Mentoring Scheme* pairs experienced Teaching and Research Academics (mentors) with colleagues at an earlier career stage (mentees), to provide guidance and structured support.

What is mentoring?

Each participant will enter this scheme with their own individual objectives, expectations and definition of 'mentoring'. The original 'Mentor' was a wise and trusted counsellor or adviser from Greek mythology but 'mentoring' or 'mentorship' is now used to describe a developmental partnership.

In the context of this scheme, mentoring is considered to be a time-limited developmental relationship between colleagues, one of whom will be more experienced.

The mentoring scheme was designed to meet the following four goals:

1. Share knowledge and expertise
2. Increase cross-institutional networking and mentoring
3. Support mentees with goal setting and career management
4. Support mentees in taking responsibility for their own skills and career development

As mentoring relationships form and progress, it is likely that pairs will formulate additional goals, specific to them.

This booklet is designed to help you develop/refresh the skills required to undertake a successful mentoring partnership and to act as reference guide over the course of your partnership.

What does this scheme involve?

Mentoring pairs will want to establish their own rules around their relationship in terms of commitment, frequency of meetings, methods of communication and roles.

We envisage, however, that for almost everyone the scheme will involve:

An initial meeting

- Ensure the venue is comfortable for both parties and where interruptions can be avoided.
- Plan to dedicate around 45 minutes and use this time to build a rapport.
- Discuss how the partnership will work, mentee aspirations and realistic objectives.

Mentoring agreements

Pairs may choose to keep a written record of their medium/long term goals and aspirations, and logistics and ground rules in the form of a 'mentoring agreement'.

Ongoing meetings and progression

- Mutually agreed e.g. one hour per month for a 12-month period.
- Meetings can vary in duration and medium: A five-minute email may be as helpful as a 45-minute conversation; video conference calls, phone calls, coffees and lunches are all viable.
- Agree your preferences with your partner.
- Update goals or actions and discuss the effectiveness of the partnership.

Documenting progress

- Mentoring relationships are progressive and developmental.
- Crystallise the mentee's goals, set objectives, take action, review progress.

Towards the end of the mentoring cycle pairs will be contacted and asked if their mentoring partnership will:

- Officially close: arrange a final meeting to review progress and future actions.
Mentors will be asked if they wish to remain in the scheme for the next cycle
Mentees will not be re-matched unless they make this preference
 - Continue formally as part of the scheme or
 - Continue informally outside of the scheme
- For B and C we will ask you to confirm your decision.

Before the mentoring partnership begins, consider what mentoring is and familiarise yourself with the skills involved to make the most of your partnership.

Different developmental partnerships – where does mentoring fit in?

The three most common developmental partnerships are mentoring, coaching and counselling. They share some common features, but also have some important differences:

	Mentoring	Coaching	Counselling
Focused on progress or solutions	✓	✓	✗
Relates to 'now' and 'future'	✓	✓	✗
May include more 'directive' approaches	✓	?	✗

Progress focused: Mentoring and coaching are focused on defining the mentee's developmental goals and addressing them in a collaborative, progressive manner.

Action is therefore an important component of the mentoring relationship from the perspective of the mentee. Counselling, however, is more focused on developing understanding and self-awareness.

The 'now' and the 'future': Mentoring and coaching focus on 'where are you now?', 'where do you want to be?', 'how will you get there?'. Counselling, however, is more about the now and the past – 'where are you now?' and 'how did you get here?'.

Directive vs non-directive: Coaching in the context of sports, for example, is a very directive process. The coach provides advice to the coachee and/or explicitly tells them how to improve their performance.

Coaching in the context of developing leadership capability however, is a non-directive discipline characterised by the belief that the coachee holds the solution. The coach mainly facilitates a process by which the coachee evaluates possible solutions and makes their own decision about what actions to take.

Mentoring tends to be a much more flexible process, based on responding to the needs of the mentee. This is more likely to involve the mentor using directive processes, such as providing advice, guidance, and making suggestions.

Underlying principles of mentoring

Before your mentoring partnership begins, it is worth considering the underlying principles of mentoring and the benefits for all involved.

Voluntary participation

Mentoring schemes are most effective when both mentees and mentors participate because they want to and not because they have been compelled to.

Mentee driven

Mentoring partnerships exist for the benefit of the mentee (although there are clear benefits for the mentor as well) and should therefore be driven by the needs of the mentee.

Responsibility lies with you

Each individual is responsible for themselves in the mentoring process. Set high expectations of yourself and of what you can contribute to the meeting, rather than having such expectations of the other person.

Collaborative venture

Work together through giving and openly receiving feedback, joint negotiation, decision making and consistent support. Making changes and moving out of comfort zones is stressful, so the supportive yet challenging climate is crucial.

Finite duration

Partnerships with a defined end point are more likely to be productive, as this creates an imperative for action. Partnerships within this scheme will be supported for 12 months, with the option to agree to continue for a further period if the partnership is still productive.

Confidential relationship

Trust each other and develop a safe, non-judgmental relationship where you can both be open and uninhibited in a sensitive discussion. You should each continue to respect confidential information, even after the mentoring relationship has formally been completed.

Discussion and reflection

Mentoring meetings provide the opportunity to tease out difficult issues and think creatively about solving problems. You can focus on the details, reflect on the situation and plan for the future. Feedback must be delivered in a constructive manner.

Holistic mindset

Progress and development in one area of professional life and work is likely to impact positively on other parts. It is therefore sensible to focus more on areas of potential development and enhancement; on actions and results.

Supportive approach

Development happens best when individuals are listened to, understood, respected and valued and when interpersonal skills are recognised, used and reviewed as effectively as possible. Offer empathy and respect and relate to each other in warm and genuine ways.

Everyone benefits

Mentoring is essentially about learning – identifying, facilitating, supporting and celebrating learning. Both mentor and mentee can benefit from the process in terms of personal and professional development.

Benefits to the Mentee

Learn from an experienced colleague
Assistance in career development planning
Gain insight, knowledge, ideas and advice
Clarify ideas and raise awareness of opportunities

Mutual benefits

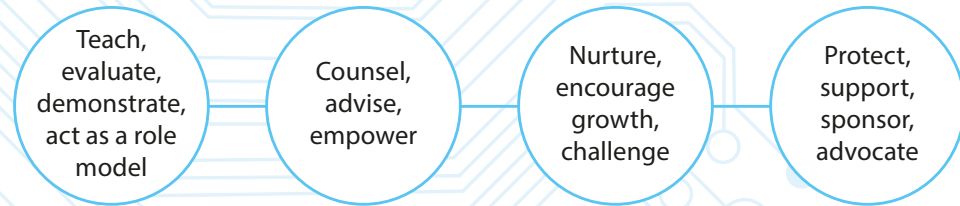
Continue professional development
Develop specific skills
Extend your professional network

Benefits to the Mentor

Share knowledge and insight
Fresh perspective
Enable the next generation
Raises awareness of the challenges facing your mentee and their peers

Mentoring models and partnership roles

The role of the mentor and the mentee within a mentoring partnership is complex and the role of the mentor may depend on the objectives of the mentee. Often the role of mentor will have many facets:



Solution focused approach:

One way of describing the mentor-mentee relationship is to consider how a mentor might assist their mentee with a problem.

The mentee begins by identifying and analysing the problem, and the mentor probes the understanding of the complexities involved. The mentor can then challenge their mentee to use a different perspective and to redefine the problem in a different way, which may make it easier to tackle:



Expertise focused approach:

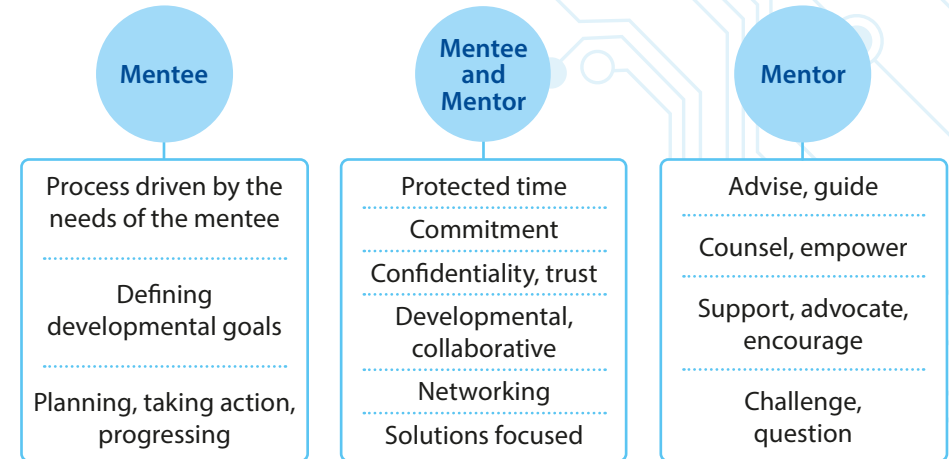
Another model describes the mentee expecting the mentor to contribute the expertise of a master craftsman or an experienced professional. However, the relationship is not primarily a showcase for the mentor's abilities.

The mentor also has the task of eliciting the best from their mentee. This can be done by giving encouragement, building confidence and demonstrating best practice:



The role of the mentor and the mentee within a mentoring partnership may change during the life of a partnership, or even during a single meeting, depending on circumstances and the needs of the mentee.

Typical mentee and/or mentor roles



Mentee driven

The mentoring partnership process is driven by the mentee who should therefore use this opportunity to clarify and define their objectives (covered later).

However, it is not always the case that the mentee will have clear ideas about the areas they want to develop or what they want to gain from the partnership.

Protected time and collaboration

One of the great benefits of mentoring is that the protected time, completely focused on the mentee, allows the mentee to explore and clarify in their own mind, their aspirations and goals. These may never have been previously defined by the mentee, or expressed to anyone else.

Commitment

Mentoring partnerships are therefore reliant on mentors who are committed to providing the environment, support, protected time and collaborative process needed by the mentee.

Mentoring agreements

One of the first things we recommend you do when you first meet your mentoring partner is to set down a mentoring 'agreement'.

Making time to formulate such an agreement at the beginning of the partnership is an important part of successful mentoring as it allows you to clarify:

- What each of you hopes to gain from the partnership overall.
- The medium and long-term goals of the mentee (the bigger picture).
- How much time and effort you are prepared to invest.
- The logistics of how your partnership will work.

You can then return to this agreement during the course of your partnership.

See below for some examples of mentee goals and mentor areas of advice/support to help you clarify your objectives.

Use the template overleaf to jot down your thoughts and ideas.

Examples of Mentee goals for a mentoring partnership

Academic career progression – learn about expectations, duties and roles

Prepare a research proposal, develop independent research interests

Increase awareness of career possibilities in other sectors – prepare for transition

Publishing, networking, public engagement, returning from a career break, work-life balance

Examples of Mentor areas of advice/support

Mentee career progression and research profile development, working in/with industry

Publishing strategies, peer review processes, grant and fellowship applications.

Collaboration, public engagement, project management, specific skills, work-life balance

Mentoring agreement

Purpose: expectations, roles, anticipated tasks

Meetings: in person/video conference, duration, frequency, venue

Ground rules: confidentiality, 'no go' areas, responsibilities

Criteria for success: monitoring progress, relationship, communication, feelings, achievement

Other points

Getting the most out of your mentoring meetings: GROW and be SMART!

Crystallising goals

Once the framework for the mentoring partnership is in place and the medium/long-term goals and aspirations of the mentee have been discussed (documented in the mentoring agreement), the focus should turn to:

- Clarifying the realistic objectives of the mentee.
- What can be achieved within the one-year mentoring partnership cycle.
- How the mentoring process will contribute to the mentee's medium/long-term goals and aspirations.

The **GROW** model is a simple framework you can use for structuring your mentoring sessions. **GROW** stands for:

Goal	where they would like to go?
Current Reality	where are you currently?
Options (or Obstacles)	exploring various routes
Will (or Way Forward)	commitment to making the journey

Once a clear sense emerges about the mentee's priorities and what they want to achieve, some SMART objectives can be defined, that help pave the way forward:

SMART objectives are effective because they are:

Specific: Vague objectives are difficult to progress. It is hard to know what action to take to address them and to know whether they have been achieved.

Measurable: Measurable objectives can be assessed and success evaluated.

Achievable: Goals need to be realistic and manageable, while at the same time challenging.

Relevant: Objectives should be targeted to make the most difference in delivering long-term goals and aspirations. Objectives therefore need to be directly relevant to these goals and must be prioritised to ensure that they deliver the greatest impact.

Timed: An objective without a deadline will rarely be achieved. The deadline creates an imperative for action and helps to ensure that the time available is used productively to move towards achieving the individual objectives and the longer-term goals.

Overview of the partnership cycle

Introductory stage

- Set the tone of your relationship, both on a personal and professional basis.
- Discuss expectations, set clear time boundaries, clarify purpose and outline the anticipated value of the process to both of you (mentoring agreement).
- Draw on the GROW and SMART mentoring frameworks to clarify goals and set specific objectives.
- Be conscious of sending the correct signals with your body language and expressions.

The main stage

The main stage is where progress is made:

Keep longer term goals in mind

- Address the agreed partnership objectives and work through them to achieve practical progress.
- Accommodate any immediate and pressing issues which may arise.

Regularly review

- What is going well, what the mentee is pleased with so far.
- Any areas which are not going to plan / causing frustration / concern or lack of progress. Explore ways of improving the situation.
- The practicalities of the mentoring partnership: frequency of meetings, productivity, benefits.

Concluding stage

Mentoring partners should plan for the end of the partnership and schedule a final meeting to:

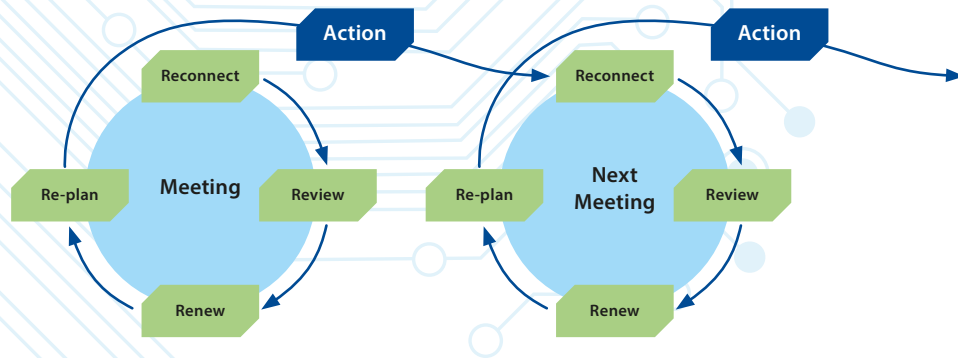
- Review achievements in relation to the original objectives and beyond.
- Explore how the longer-term goals of the mentee may have changed.
- Discuss subsequent steps that may follow after the partnership ends.
- Talk over the benefits gained from the partnership and how well the partnership worked.
- Agree how future contact will be managed.

See overleaf for a guide to maintaining a productive partnership.

Keeping the momentum going

'Do it, review it, renew it!': the planning, action, review cycle

These five stages form a cycle of planning, action and review, which ensures that the partnership remains productive, with forward momentum.



Reconnect: re-establish rapport through informal conversation.

Review: what progress has been made since the last meeting / what went well and what did not / what was learned / what follow up actions are required?

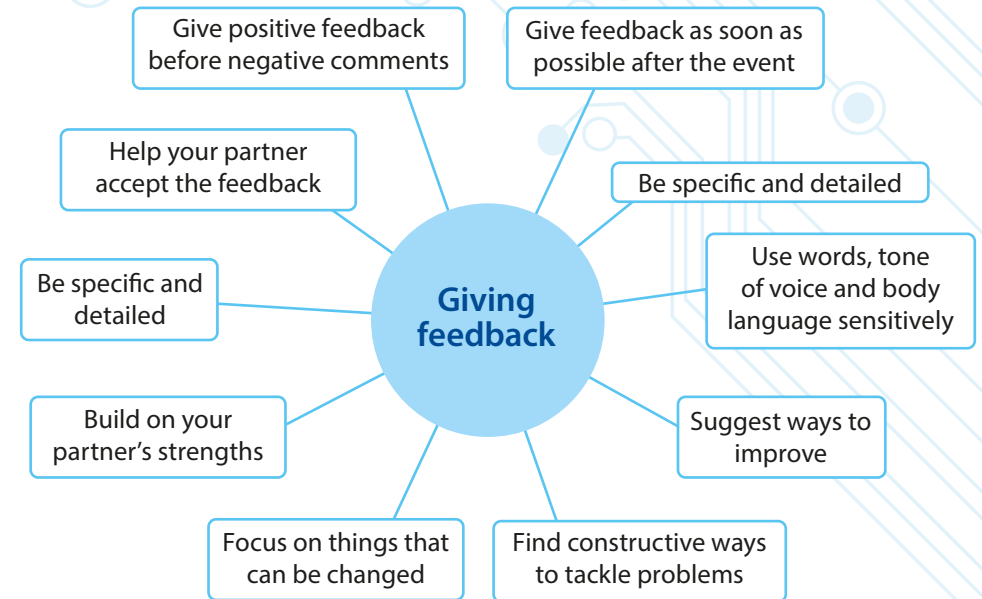
Renew: discuss any new business resulting from the review process / next steps towards achieving the objectives discussed at start of the partnership or brand new objectives / opportunities / problems / altered priorities.

Re-plan: review the meeting, draw out the actions which will enable the mentee to move forward. Agree on one or more specific actions that should be undertaken before the next meeting.

Action (leading into next meeting): the mentee should be working on the agreed actions between meetings and prepare to review these. If no actions are taken between meetings and there is no progress, the momentum and the value of the partnership may decline.

Key mentoring skills

During mentoring meetings, consider and develop the following skills to help you make the most of your mentoring partnership cycle.



Receiving feedback

Talk to your partner about how to receive and use your feedback, regardless of your role. Consider trying the following:

Ask for feedback about specific points

Clarify the details to ensure you understand

Look for specific ways to improve

Listen to feedback without being defensive

Ask for advice and support

Key mentoring skills

Active listening

Concentrate

Hear what they say; watch what they do; think about what is happening.

Use your body language effectively

Smile or nod to encourage; do not fidget; maintain eye contact but do not stare.

Use questions

To check your understanding; to explore options; to clarify the communication.

Consider

The content of what is being discussed; the process of the interaction; the structure (scene-setting, exploring issues, summarising, concluding).

Avoid

Imposing your values; blocking emotions; making decisions for your partner; trying to find a quick and easy solution.

Adapting to changes over time and transitions

The mentor-mentee relationship develops over time and often goes through several stages.

Together you will need to consider how best to initiate and establish the relationship, then consolidate and maintain it, then when it has run its course, withdraw from it.

You will also find it valuable to discuss and analyse these change processes.

At the start of the process, you may be highly motivated and excited but also anxious and uncertain.

Once into the relationship, the mentee usually gains confidence but may also experience "mid-term blues" or frustration.

Towards the end, the mentee may feel relief, a sense of achievement, and concern about what happens next.

Refer to this booklet over the course of your partnership cycle to help get you back on track, maintain your momentum and keep an open dialogue.

Asking the right questions

Although mentoring and coaching are distinct processes, mentoring can include the use of coaching techniques when it would be appropriate and useful to do so.

One of the most useful aspects of the coaching discipline is the effective use of different types of question.

Here are eight question types to help your mentoring partnership progress.

1. Future placing questions

- Invite people into their future, when they have achieved their goal/s.
- Connect people with what they want to achieve and motivate them.
- Help people re-think or clarify what they want and what they need to do to achieve their goal/s.

What will you see, hear and feel when you are actually in this new role?

What would it be like to be person 'x' who already does this?

Put yourself 6 months in the future. Standing there, what decisions do you need to make today to achieve this?

2. Truth probing questions:

- Help people make large insightful steps forward in their thinking.
- Are often used because the mentor/coach feels that something is not being disclosed and that this may be stopping the person they are mentoring from making progress.
- Need time to be pondered and processed to generate a meaningful response.

What do you really want?

What is actually stopping you?

What is the truth here?

What else is there here?

How will you look back on this?

What gives you most anxiety here?

3. Simple questions:

- Are very short and straightforward, often emerging in the mentor's mind but not articulated.
- Create a wide-angle lens view of an issue or situation.
- Have very little content or context, therefore they encourage lateral thinking and bring forth useful insights.

What do you want?

What's next?

What's needed?

Where do you want to go from here?

What do you think?

4. Reframing questions:

- Allow a negative viewpoint (which may be stifling progress) to be reframed in a more positive way.
- Allow a person to draw on another's strengths.

Individual: *Why do I always miss the boat?*

Reframe: *What does getting the boat look like?*

What can you do to be a success?

How do those that catch the boat respond to challenges like this?

What would success do for you?

5. Incisive questions:

- Temporarily lift limiting beliefs or external constraints that are perceived to be preventing progress and enable new avenues of thought to be generated.
- Encourage the individual to consider new options by stimulating creative thinking pathways.

Examples:

What would you do if there were no resource constraints?

What would you do if you privately knew the answer to this?

What if you didn't have to live with the repercussions of this decision?

If X wasn't a problem for you, what would you do then?

6. Permission and precision questions:

- Are important when a person is seeming to avoid an issue or when a theme or pattern has emerged.

Permission questions help to check out whether an individual is willing to explore a potentially difficult area. Once permission has been granted, the precision questions can begin.

The **precision** question directly challenges what the individual says and is designed to slice through to the underlying belief.

How exactly do you think they will be upset?

What precisely do you think your deputy would think if you explained?

What specifically do you perceive as being upsetting to your boss here?

What fundamentally is the impact on you of withholding this information?

7. Distal questions

- Extend beyond the mentoring meeting in to the time between meetings and are designed to continue the processing of themes.
- Are typically asked near the end of the session so they can be processed over a longer time period.

What helpful thoughts do you bring into your office?

What thoughts would you choose to leave outside the office?

What is it to be a good manager?

What do I/you need to let go of so I/you can be even more effective?

8. Rescue questions

- Can be used when someone has hit a wall during the mentoring session.
- Aim to create a shift in thinking and transport the mentee from their 'negative' place to begin thinking positively again.

What strengths do you have right now that could help you here?

*Earlier you said you were good at *****, how could that help you right now?*

When in the past have you successfully overcome a challenge like this? How can you use what you learned then to help you now?

Mentoring dilemmas

Here are some common mentoring dilemmas, with suggested responses.

The mentee or mentor uses the sessions to talk about personal problems

The personal problems may be so overwhelming that they will inhibit any meaningful discussion about work issues.

A mentor is not a trained counsellor. It may be appropriate to suggest that they refer themselves to Occupational Health, counselling service, GP etc.

The mentor or mentee does not complete the agreed action plans

Explore if the plans were unrealistic.

Identify the reasons why the plans have not been completed.

If this recurs, does it indicate a lack of commitment from either/both of the parties?

The mentee and mentor have very different styles of working

Recognise that different approaches may be equally valid.

Mentors should not impose, and mentees should not copy, work styles.

The mentor is aware of problems that the mentee has not mentioned

It is alright for the mentor to raise the issue, but they must give the mentee the option not to talk about it.

The mentee may wish to return to the issue in the future.

The mentee/mentor thinks their partner has breached confidentiality

It is important to raise any such issues within the partnership.

If this is not possible or the relationship breaks down, contact a scheme coordinator.

The mentor is supportive but not challenging so the relationship is too cosy

Mentoring is meant to be developmental and to encourage growth, so challenge within a supportive environment is good.

The onus here is on the mentor to ensure an appropriate balance of challenge and support.

The mentee keeps asking for support outwith the agreed mentoring meetings

Revisit the mentoring contract and clarify your expectations.

The mentor can encourage the mentee to develop a wide support network and to use different sources of support.

The mentor is too keen to offer solutions and advice

Encouraging mentees to work out their own solutions will prove a better long-term strategy.

If you feel tempted to offer advice, why not offer a range of solutions and discuss the consequences of each?

One partner suggests a joint work project

Would this enhance or damage the mentoring relationship?

What happens to the project if the relationship falters?

What happens to the relationship if the project goes badly?

The mentee or mentor gives their partner a small gift

This might depend on the nature and value of the gift and the stage in the relationship.

Would refusing a gift make you feel comfortable and uncompromised? Or would it seem to your partner like rejection?

Further reading and resources

Clutterbuck, D & Lane, G (eds)(2004) *The Situational Mentor: an international review of competences and capabilities in mentoring*. Aldershot. Gower

Clutterbuck, D (1985) *Everyone Needs a Mentor*
London, CIPD

Herman, L & Mandell, A (2004) *From Teaching to Mentoring: principle and practice, dialogue and life in adult education*.
London. RoutledgeFalmer

Johnson, WB & Ridley, CR (2004) *The Elements of Mentoring*.
Basingstoke. Palgrave Macmillan

Meggison, D (2006) *Mentoring in Action: A practical guide for managers. 2nd ed.*
London. Kogan Page

Zachary, LJ (2000) *The Mentor's Guide: facilitating effective learning relationships*.
San Francisco. Jossey-Bass

Zeus, P & Skiffington, S (2002) *The Coaching at Work Toolkit*
North Ryde NSW. McGraw-Hill

Downey, M (2003) *Effective Coaching: Lessons from the Coach's Coach*
New York. Thomson Texere

For more information about this scheme visit:

St Andrews:

<https://bit.ly/sta-mentor>

Dundee:

<https://bit.ly/dundee-TRAMS>

Occupational Health & Counselling Services

Support for any personal issues that the mentoring scheme may raise:

University of St Andrews:

www.st-andrews.ac.uk/ehss/occupationalhealth

University of Dundee:

Counselling Service www.dundee.ac.uk/safety/occhealth

Abertay University:

<https://intranet.abertay.ac.uk/staff/services/people-services/learning-and-development/tram/>

(This link is embedded in the intranet and can only be accessed when employees are logged in)

Glasgow School of Art:

www.gsa.ac.uk/about-gsa/working-at-the-gsa/hr-policies

James Hutton Institute:

<https://gsofa.sharepoint.com/sites/intranet/ProfessionalSupport/HR/Pages/Emotional-Wellbeing-.aspx>

(This link is embedded in the intranet and can only be accessed when employees are logged in)

Trinity College Dublin:

<https://www.tcd.ie/hr/our-services>

Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh

BeSupported: <https://www.axabesupported.co.uk>

TogetherAll: <https://togetherall.com/en-gb>

Authorship

This handbook was originally authored by Gaye Manwaring, Lorraine Walsh, Martin Williams and Catriona Wilson.

Updated August 2017 by Eithne Graham, Diane Munday and Jos Finer.

Updated June 2018, 2019, 2020 and 2021 by Eithne Graham and Diane Munday.

Contacts

For further guidance, queries, problems, contact one of the scheme coordinators

University of St Andrews

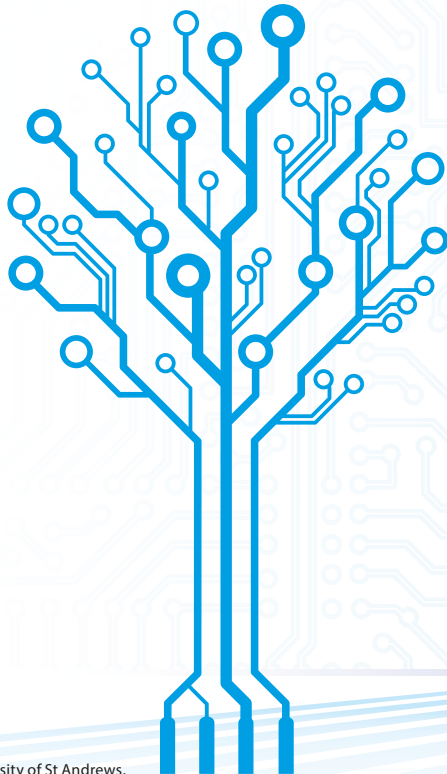
Dr Diane Munday
Research Staff Developer
OSDS (Organisational and Staff
Development Services)

E: mentoring@st-andrews.ac.uk

University of Dundee

Eithne Graham
Training and Development Officer
OPD (Organisational and Professional
Development) unit

E: mentoring@dundee.ac.uk



Designed by Print & Design, University of St Andrews.
Updated July 2022.

The University of St Andrews is a charity registered in Scotland, No: SC013532.
The University of Dundee is a Scottish Registered Charity, No. SC015096.