

Leadership and Management Development

MENTOR'S HANDBOOK

For Warwick staff who mentor other colleagues



WARWICK



INTRODUCTION

This Handbook is for colleagues who mentor other members of staff at Warwick. It aims to provide you with an easy-to-use reference guide that will support you at each stage of a mentoring relationship. It assumes a level of knowledge gained through completing the University's 'What is Mentoring?' online course.

There is also a separate Mentor's Toolkit which you may find helpful. The Toolkit builds on the online training and covers skills, tools and techniques for mentoring conversations.

This Handbook is divided into two sections:

Section 1: Mentoring at Warwick

Provides information about best practice, ethics and responsibilities.

Section 2: Your role as a mentor

Takes you through your role at each stage of the mentoring relationship.

Resources

Throughout the Handbook there are links to resources that you may find useful. These are indicated in a grey box.

CONTENTS

1 MENTORING AT WARWICK

| | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| Mentoring at Warwick | 4 |
| Best practice in mentoring | 5 |
| Mentor's responsibilities | 6 |
| Mentee's responsibilities | 6 |
| Code of Ethics | 7 |
| Data protection | 8 |
| Conflicts of interest | 8 |



2

YOUR ROLE AS A MENTOR

| | |
|--|----|
| Chemistry conversation | 10 |
| Mentoring agreement conversation | 11 |
| Goal setting | 12 |
| Mentoring meetings | 13 |
| Asking for feedback | 13 |
| Reviewing progress | 13 |
| When a mentoring relationship doesn't work out | 14 |
| Ending the mentoring relationship | 15 |

MENTORING AT WARWICK

Mentoring is...

A developmental relationship in which one person draws on their experience, expertise and knowledge to advise and guide a less experienced person in order to enhance their performance, discover more about themselves and develop their potential capability.

Mentoring provides University staff with the opportunity to receive focused developmental support outside of their normal line management relationship. Mentors are colleagues who use their knowledge, expertise and experience to help enhance another colleague's performance and/or development.

Being a mentor does not mean you are a coach; the University has a different provision for coaching.

Colleagues may seek mentoring to help with any aspect of their development. Mentoring is often used to support:

- Talent development.
- Management and leadership development.
- Diversity and inclusion.
- Career development.
- New to the University/HE sector.
- New to the role.
- Secondments.
- Specialist / subject matter support.

BEST PRACTICE IN MENTORING

- Mentoring is for all members of staff.
- Participation as a mentor or mentee is voluntary.
- If mentors are new to mentoring, it is recommended that they complete the 'What is Mentoring?' online training.
- Warwick is a member of the European Mentoring and Coaching Council and ascribes to its Global Code of Ethics.
- Mentors require the ability to be non-directive, to listen actively, to be non-judgemental, to ask powerful questions, to commit their time, to share their experience and wisdom, and to have a genuine interest in the mentee's learning and development.
- Mentors should consider how many mentees they can support at any one time.
- Either party has the right to end the mentoring relationship without blame or fault or detailed explanation.
- The initial meeting between mentor and mentee will be a 'no commitment' chemistry conversation, the purpose of which is for both parties to assess their compatibility and to establish a rapport.
- Mentors will hold a mentoring agreement conversation with the mentee before the mentoring begins. The purpose of this is to ensure a shared understanding.
- Mentoring meetings may take place in-person, online or on the phone. Mentoring meetings can take place in a public place, e.g. a café, as long as both parties are in agreement.



RESPONSIBILITIES

MENTOR'S RESPONSIBILITIES

- To comply with the Code of Ethics (see p7).
- To act with integrity regarding meetings with mentees, including arriving on time and being prepared.
- To ask for, receive and reflect on feedback from their mentee.
- To adhere to the University's values and guiding principles
- To give honest feedback to the mentee in a constructive and respectful way.



MENTEE'S RESPONSIBILITIES

- To commit to actively engaging in the mentoring process, accepting personal responsibility for the outcomes.
- Act with integrity regarding meetings with mentors, including arriving on time and being prepared.
- To undertake any actions identified during a mentoring meeting by the agreed deadline.
- To be honest with the mentor about how the relationship is working.
- To provide feedback on your mentoring experience to the mentor if requested.
- To respect the mentor's time, to not impose beyond what is reasonable and to not ask for excessive support from the mentor in between mentoring meetings.
- To respect the position of third parties (e.g. their line manager).
- To adhere to the University's values and guiding principles.
- To arrange a suitable location for the mentoring meetings if they are taking place in person.

CODE OF ETHICS

The University recognises its responsibility in ensuring that all mentoring provided and received by staff is ethical. The University is a member of the European Mentoring and Coaching Council (EMCC) and ascribes to its Global Code of Ethics.

Mentors are expected to adhere to this Code of Ethics, which has been adapted from the EMCC Global Code of Ethics:

- Mentoring is a confidential activity in which both parties have a duty of care towards each other. The mentor will only disclose information when explicitly agreed with the mentee or when they believe there is a serious danger to the mentee or others if the information is withheld.
- Mentors may keep notes about their mentoring meetings. All notes/records should be stored and disposed of in a manner that ensures confidentiality, security and privacy and complies with GDPR and the University's Data Protection Policy.
- Participation of both parties is voluntary. Either party may break off the relationship if they feel it is not working. Both parties share responsibility for the smooth winding down and proper ending of the relationship.
- Both parties will be honest with each other about how the relationship is working.
- The mentor will not impose their own agenda on the mentee, nor will they intrude into areas that the mentee wishes to keep off-limits.
- Mentors will be aware of their own level of competence and ensure they operate within the limits of their competence. Mentors should be aware of and should signpost the mentee to other support services within the University if appropriate.
- Mentors are responsible for setting and maintaining clear, appropriate and culturally-sensitive boundaries with mentees.
- Mentors should be aware of the potential for unconscious bias and seek to ensure they take a respectful and inclusive approach.
- Mentors will be aware of any potential conflicts of interest arising through the mentoring relationship and address them quickly to ensure that there is no detriment to the mentee, themselves or to the University. If the conflict cannot be managed, the mentor will end the mentoring relationship.
- Both parties will respect each other's time and other responsibilities, ensuring they do not impose beyond what is reasonable. Both parties will also respect the position of third parties (for example, the mentee's line manager).
- Mentors will raise any ethical dilemmas arising from their mentoring with Leadership and Management Development.
- Mentors will evaluate the quality of their mentoring through feedback from mentees.
- Mentors understand that their responsibilities continue beyond the end of the mentoring relationship in terms of confidentiality, secure storage and disposal of records, conflict of interest, and avoidance of any exploitation of the former mentoring relationship.

DATA PROTECTION

Confidentiality is fundamental to a mentoring relationship. Mentors may find it helpful to keep a record of the mentee's goals, topics discussed and actions. If you take notes or keep a record of any aspect of your mentoring and mentoring conversations, you should store them securely and in accordance with GDPR and the University's [Data Protection Policy](#). See the Resources for templates to help your record keeping.

Resources

- Mentoring agreement conversation template.
- Record of mentoring meeting template.
- Progress review template.



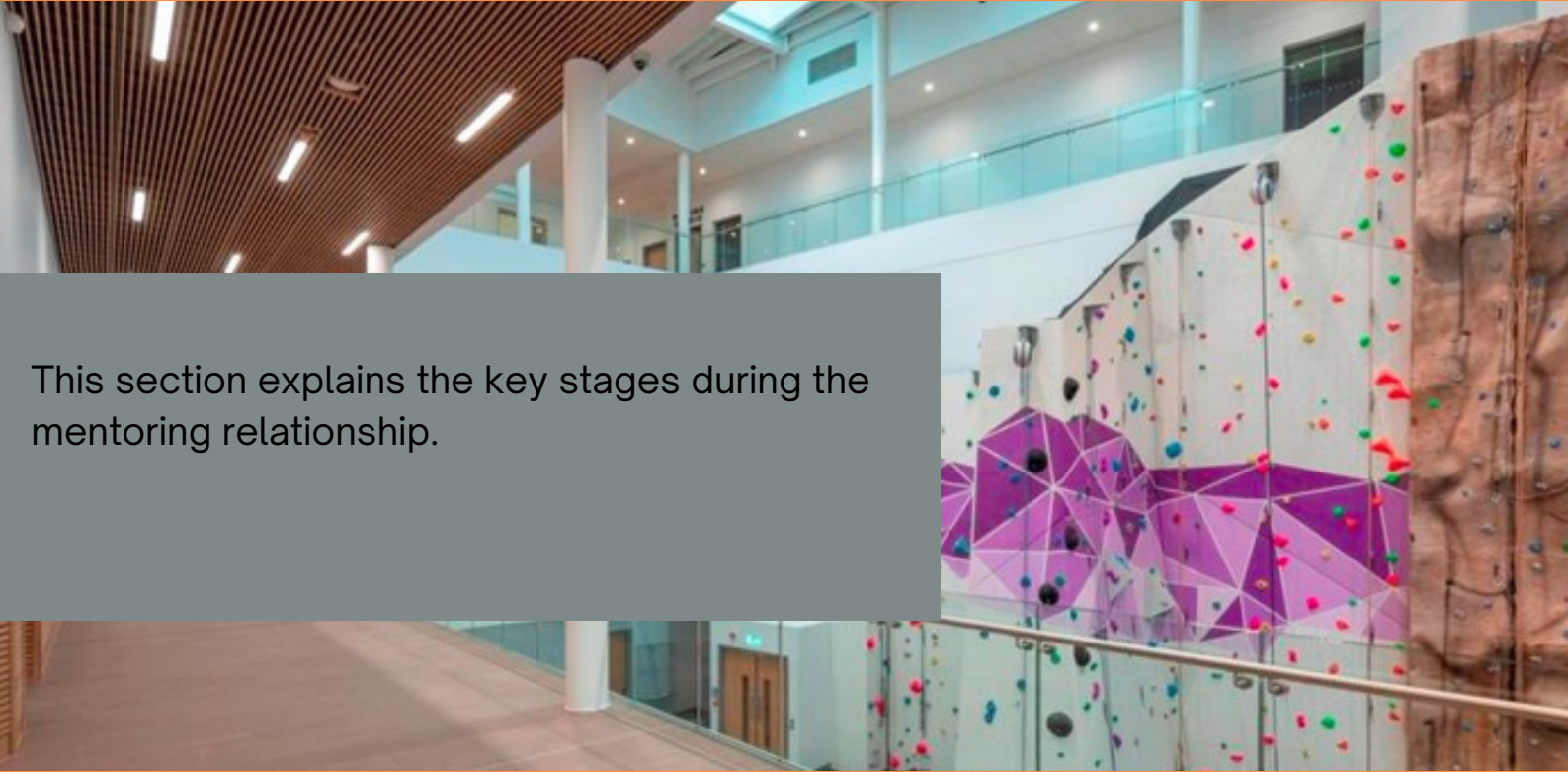
CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

A conflict of interest is a situation in which a mentor or mentee are in a position to derive benefit from the mentoring relationship, or where there is a clash between their job role and their mentor or mentee role. An example is where a mentor is also a member of an interview panel, for a job for which the mentee is a candidate.

Consider the impact of a mentoring relationship on your other working practices, processes and relationships. If either party perceives an actual or potential conflict of interest, they should have an open and honest conversation about it. If a conflict of interest exists, you may need to set boundaries around what you can or cannot discuss. Don't take the mentoring forward if you feel that entering into a mentoring arrangement will compromise you or your mentee in any way.

YOUR ROLE AS A MENTOR

This section explains the key stages during the mentoring relationship.



CHEMISTRY CONVERSATION

A chemistry conversation is the first contact between the potential mentor and mentee. It is an informal, friendly discussion which enables both parties to get to know each other, build rapport and to assess whether they are a good match and can work together.

A chemistry conversation is a 'no-commitment' conversation. This means that either party can decide not to go ahead with the mentoring relationship, without blame. It simply means that they feel they are not the right match.



You should also explain that if the mentee decides to go ahead with you as their mentor, you will have a mentoring agreement conversation with them before the mentoring begins, and explain the purpose of the mentoring agreement.

Chemistry conversations can take place online, in a meeting room or in a public place such as a café.

During the chemistry conversation you should use your mentoring skills of active, empathic listening, skilled questioning, being non-directive and non-judgemental. This is a chance for your potential mentee to experience your mentoring style, which will help them to decide whether you are the right mentor for them.

Topics you might want to discuss during the chemistry conversation:

- Find out about the mentee – ask them open questions about their career, role, interests.
- Find out what the mentee is looking for in a mentor.
- Why you have volunteered to be a mentor and what you hope to gain from it.
- Previous mentoring experience as a mentor or mentee and what you gained from this.
- Your career and professional experience.
- A little about you as a person, family, interests etc. – within the boundaries that you are comfortable to share.

MENTORING AGREEMENT CONVERSATION

The mentoring agreement conversation (also known as ‘contracting’) is an important and essential part of mentoring. It is a conversation between mentor and mentee which is led by the mentor. It takes place before the mentoring begins. The purpose of the mentoring agreement is to ensure a shared understanding of:

- What mentoring is and isn’t.
- The boundaries in which the mentoring relationship will operate.
- How the mentoring will work in practice.
- The roles and responsibilities of both parties.

The mentoring agreement should not be framed as a ‘chat’. It involves reaching an explicit agreement that provides structure, guidance and alignment for both the mentor and mentee. A lack of shared understanding could lead to assumptions or misunderstandings later on in the mentoring relationship.

Topics to cover during a mentoring agreement conversation:

- Confidentiality.
- Role and responsibilities of mentor.
- Role and responsibilities of mentee.
- Boundaries.
- Conflict of interest.
- Duration of mentoring meetings.
- Frequency of meetings.
- Postponement or cancellation arrangements.
- Duration of mentoring relationship.
- Record keeping.
- Review arrangements.
- Mentee's goals.
- Mentor's goals (if appropriate).
- Feedback.
- Completion/ending the mentoring relationship.

Resources

Mentoring agreement conversation checklist: covers these points in more detail and can help you prepare for the conversation.

Mentoring agreement conversation template: to keep a record of the agreement conversation. It isn’t compulsory to keep a written record of the mentoring agreement conversation, but you should ensure the conversation takes place.



GOAL SETTING

Setting goals is an important part of mentoring. Goal setting is also powerful. It helps people to:

- Create a sense of purpose.
- Have a clear focus.
- Overcome procrastination.
- Foster better time management.
- Drive motivation.
- Hold themselves accountable.
- Measure their progress.

The mentee should determine their own goals, that is, what they want to achieve through the mentoring, although the mentor may help the mentee to shape and define the goals. Goals will be discussed during the mentoring agreement conversation, so that both parties know what they are working towards and what success looks like. As far as possible encourage the mentee to develop goals which are SMARTER.

SMARTER Goals

- Specific – is the goal clear?
- Measurable – how will you know when it has been achieved?
- Achievable – does the mentee have the resources and time to meet the goal? Is it realistic?
- Relevant – does the goal align with the mentee’s development needs and/or career?
- Time-based – does the goal have a deadline or series of milestones?
- Engaging – does the mentee feel motivated to achieve the goal?
- Reviewed – arrange a date to review progress.



Encourage the mentee to use an active verb or action word to help make the goal measurable; for example: complete, publish, plan, produce, develop, design, install, observe, identify, investigate, propose.

Remember, the SMARTER the goals, the easier it will be to review progress made towards achieving them.

MENTORING MEETINGS

First meeting

Having had a chemistry conversation and a mentoring agreement conversation, you should have been able to get to know your mentee and to build a rapport with them. You will have established goals with your mentee during the mentoring agreement conversation.

At the first mentoring meeting it is recommended that you review the goals with your mentee, just to check they are still relevant. You can then move into your first mentoring conversation, using the skills that you learnt in your training.

ASKING FOR FEEDBACK

It is good practice to ask your mentee for feedback regularly throughout the mentoring relationship. This will help you to adapt your approach to each mentee, and also to improve your mentoring skills. You are encouraged to build this into each mentoring conversation, and to reflect on any feedback you receive.

Resources

Mentoring meeting checklist: to help you structure your meetings.

Record of mentoring meeting template: to keep a record of the conversation.

Progress review template: to record the mentee's progress.



REVIEWING PROGRESS

Reviewing the mentee's progress towards the goals that they identified is important;

- It is motivational for both parties.
- It provides an opportunity to acknowledge achievements and progress.
- It is helpful in evaluating the overall impact and value of your mentoring.

A **Progress review template** can be downloaded if you wish to use it.

WHEN A MENTORING RELATIONSHIP DOESN'T WORK OUT

Hopefully you will find yourself in a productive mentoring relationship that is rewarding for both parties. Occasionally mentoring arrangements don't work out, despite everyone's best efforts. Sometimes there is a mismatch on an interpersonal level, or miscommunication between mentor and mentee. Not every pair is a good match, and that's okay.

Signs that a mentoring relationship may not be working:

- The mentee cancels appointments, fails to turn up or regularly rearranges at short notice.
- The mentee consistently fails to make progress on actions identified in meetings.
- The mentee appears distracted in sessions.

The first step is to raise your concerns with the mentee. Next time you meet, be honest and tell the mentee that you feel something isn't working; for example, "I'm sensing that you aren't sure about our next meeting...is that right?" Avoid blame and be clear and objective, for example "I would like to offer you some thoughts on how I feel the mentoring is going. It seems that when we meet you come across as distracted and are keen to leave. Is that right?". "Is there anything I could do differently?"

Give factual examples, for example dates of meetings that have been cancelled. Ask open questions to explore this and find out possible reasons. Jointly explore whether there are things you could both do to get the relationship working more effectively.

Don't feel guilty or a failure if the mentoring arrangement isn't working out. It is better to acknowledge this as soon as possible and explore why you're feeling this rather than carrying on regardless. You might find that this process is a valuable learning opportunity in itself.

ENDING THE MENTORING RELATIONSHIP

Ideally the ending of a mentoring relationship is anticipated and will have been planned for by agreeing to the duration of the relationship during the mentoring agreement conversation. Arrange a date for the final meeting and remind your mentee of this in the penultimate meeting so that you can both prepare for it.

Tips to support the ending of a mentoring relationship:

- Reflect on the mentoring – what have you both learned?
- Celebrate your mentee's successes – review the goals they set at the beginning of the relationship and any subsequent goals identified. Have a discussion about progress they have made towards meeting these goals and how they feel about this.
- Support the mentee to continue their learning; open up a discussion with them about how they can continue their learning and development post-mentoring.
- When thinking about possible future contact be realistic about the extent of your contact with each other. Although you will probably continue to have some form of interaction, it should be on a more informal basis where you consider each other as equals.
- Thank and acknowledge each other's contributions.
- End on a positive - share what you have learned and enjoyed during the mentoring.

If both parties would like to carry on with the mentoring beyond the term initially agreed, you should hold a new mentoring agreement conversation to ensure a shared understanding for the continuation of the relationship.

Resources

Progress Review Form:

If you or the mentee would find it helpful to have a record at the end of the mentoring, you can complete the Progress Review form.

Contact

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