

Mentoring Agreement Template

This Mentoring Agreement template is for mentoring pairs to use in order to discuss and frame their mentoring partnership. Having an open discussion about the aims and dynamics of mentoring and setting some specific objectives will help you both to get the most out of the experience.

Part A: Some expectations for mentoring. Please talk through each one.

What is mentoring? Mentoring can offer valuable learning opportunities at all stages of a research career. It is an important way of developing specialist expertise and also of enabling researchers to evaluate their position and to plan for success in increasingly competitive job markets. Mentoring provides opportunities for tailored and supportive professional development.

Role of the mentor: Mentoring is a diverse professional practice with many different tools and techniques available, and there is not one single 'right way' to approach being a mentor or working with a mentor. However, there are a few core concepts that mentors will commonly utilise such as building trust (the purpose of this form), suspending judgement, listening, asking questions, offering feedback, offering guidance or advice, and helping the mentee to make new professional contacts. Whatever skills or techniques a mentor chooses, they should focus on the needs and wishes of the mentee.

There are boundaries to the mentoring role too, and it's important to recognise that other specialist services are available and provide support that mentors cannot. Human Resources, the Counselling Service, your Research Office, and Trade Unions for example.

Role of the mentee: Mentoring works best when mentees take the leading role, set the agenda, take responsibility for any actions arising from the mentoring sessions, and help to shape the sessions to suit their preferences by giving feedback.

Confidentiality: Partners agree to respect each other's privacy and understand that all information disclosed during mentoring sessions will be kept strictly confidential.

Communication: It is the mentee's responsibility to keep up momentum and keep in touch to organise meetings. What other rules of communication (content, frequency, methods) are you expecting before, after and between mentoring meetings? What happens if either of you needs to cancel a meeting? What happens if no email response is received?

Feedback: Feedback from mentee to mentor is an essential part of creating a collaborative approach to mentoring. It is the mentee's responsibility to follow up and help the mentor to shape their support, by giving them some feedback. Saying for example:

- Your key learning from the mentoring session, and why you feel it added value.
- What you have put into practice since meeting and how it went.
- What you would like to focus on in the next mentoring session and anything you would like to move away from.

End of the mentoring partnership: It is natural for mentoring to add more value for both parties once mentor and mentee have grown to know and trust each other a little. Additionally, a longer-term partnership can start to blur the boundaries into friendship and at this point the neutrality and objectivity of the mentor's perspective can be lost. Some partnerships don't work at all despite best efforts, and either party should feel free to say thank you and move on if this is the case.

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Part B: Working together. Please discuss options and record your agreed way forward. Revisit as change this agreement as need demands.

Mentoring Dimensions

A good way to start is to spend some time getting to know each other. What do you have in common?

What are the mentee's longer term career aspirations?

What experiences can the mentor draw upon to support this direction of travel?

Good mentoring should not rely on an 'advice only' model: Some other things mentors can do are listening, asking questions, offering feedback, offering guidance or advice, and helping the mentee to make new professional contacts. What is appropriate here?

Mentee objectives

We agree to focus on the following 2 mentee priority objectives during our mentoring sessions. These objectives can be revisited and changed as the programme progresses.

Make your objectives small, short to medium term, specific, and achievable. How will you know if you have achieved the objective?

1.

2.

Anything else we want to talk about that will influence or affect the mentoring partnership?

Signatures: We are happy with this preliminary agreement and will use it to keep on track.

Mentor	
Mentee	