

UKSBM Career Development Mentoring Scheme – Expectations and Guidelines

If you have any questions or comments contact Professor Sharon Simpson ([UKSBM President](#)) at Sharon.Simpson@glasgow.ac.uk or Dr Eleni Karasouli (Career Development Lead) at E.Karasouli@warwick.ac.uk.

Overview

Mentoring is a relationship in which a more experienced or more knowledgeable person helps to guide a less experienced or less knowledgeable person. Mentoring is not peer support and there should be a significant difference between the career stages of mentor/mentee. The mentoring relationship is built on mutual trust and respect, and it's not a power-based relationship. Mentoring is a process for the informal transmission of knowledge, social capital, and psychosocial support perceived by the recipient as relevant to work, career, or professional development. Mentoring entails informal communication, usually face-to-face although may be supported by digital technology such as video or teleconferencing. It should take place over a sustained period of time, between a person who is perceived to have greater relevant knowledge, wisdom, or experience (the mentor) and a person who is perceived to have less (sometimes referred to as the protégé¹).

What types of qualities should I have as a mentor?

Mentors should:

- Be encouraging
- Be non-judgemental
- Be willing and able to give time
- Signpost to opportunities for career development (i.e., flag awareness of opportunities)
- Develop a professional friendship
- Develop insight through reflection
- Listen with empathy
- Offer a sounding-board
- Offer practical advice
- Share experience (usually mutually)

What types of qualities should I have as a mentee?

Mentees should:

- Actively listen
- Be honest
- Be motivated
- Be prepared for meetings
- Be proactive
- Be reflective and self-aware
- Willing to learn

Where can meetings take place?

Meeting location should be flexible. Meetings can take place face-to-face in a mutual location or workplace, over the telephone, videoconference, and/or at UKSBM annual meetings. There is no expectation for mentors and mentees to travel for meetings, but if either or both parties would like to travel to meet that is okay. Please keep in mind that meeting online gives more flexibility for matching you with a suitable partner.

How much time will I need to commit, and how often are meetings?

Time requirements will be different for each mentor-mentee dyad, depending on the mentee's goals and career stage and time requirements are flexible. This will be agreed between mentee and mentor. As a guide UKSBM recommends that the mentor and mentee meet a minimum of three times a year. The duration of the relationship will depend on the mentee's goals and the time needed to reach their goals. We expect the mentoring relationship to last around 2 years, with an optional 3rd year based on discussion and agreement of the mentor/mentee. However, the relationship may informally last as long as agreed by the mentor and mentee.

Who initiates meetings and maintains the relationship?

The dyad will receive an official introduction email from UKSBM. The first meeting should be initiated by the mentor in response to this email (i.e., as mentees might be hesitant to make the initial contact). After the mentor has initiated the first meeting, it is then the responsibility of the mentee to follow-up for future meetings. Meeting frequency should be led by the mentee.

What should the first meeting cover?

At the first meeting there should be some discussion to ensure that the match is appropriate to help the mentee reach their goals. For example, you might want to reflect on the following: do the mentor and mentee get along, does the mentor have appropriate skills and experience to foster the mentees goals, does the mentee have goals that are appropriate for a mentoring relationship.

It is recommended that the dyad use Mentoring Template Agreement in **Box 1** to guide the first meeting.

If after the first meeting, you both decide that the relationship is not suitable, the mentee should contact Professor Simpson or Dr Karasouli and we can try to reallocate you to a more suitable mentor.

What types of topics should be covered in meetings?

This list is not exclusive, and we encourage mentees to think about goals to work on during their mentoring meetings. Some topics could include:

- Developing supervision skills
- Exploring new career opportunities/alternatives
- Goal setting
- Grant writing
- Help identifying strengths, and weaknesses (i.e., CV development, developing interpersonal and intrapersonal skills)
- Lab management
- Leadership skills
- Learning organizational culture
- Management skills
- Networking
- Proposal writing
- Publishing
- Skill development
- Work/life balance

What types of topics are not suitable to cover in the mentoring relationship?

Mentoring is not designed to be a therapeutic relationship, although both parties might benefit psychologically from the topics covered in the meetings. There is no expectation that mentors

should be sponsors i.e., give jobs to mentees, go through job applications, grant applications, and papers, cannot intervene/resolve disputes, etc.

Are there any other expectations?

It is good practice for the mentor and mentee to record brief notes about what they've discussed at each meeting and any actions, and to keep an email chain of these minutes.

As a mentee, you might want to consider the possibility of becoming a mentor after your term as a mentee (subject you are at Associate Professor, or equivalent, or Professor level).

Box 1 Mentorship Agreement Template

The purpose of this template is to help both parties develop mutual goals, boundaries, and clarity around mentorship expectations. This has been adapted from Hook et al ².

The mentor and mentee should discuss and agree the following:

1. Goals: What do you hope to achieve as a results of this relationship?
2. What are the steps to achieving your goals? (e.g., meetings, manuscripts/grants, collaboration of projects, steps to achieving independence)
3. What is the meeting frequency and duration?
4. Where will meetings be held?
5. Confidentiality: All matters that are discussed should remain confidential.
6. Plan for measuring mentorship effectiveness (e.g., reviewing meeting minutes, goals, and outcomes)
7. Plan for ending mentoring relationship: How long should the relationship last for, should this be based on time, or specific goals?

Reference

1 Bozeman, B.; Feeney, M. K. (October 2007). "[Toward a useful theory of mentoring: A conceptual analysis and critique](#)". *Administration & Society*. **39** (6): 719–739. doi:[10.1177/0095399707304119](#)

2 Hook, Edward W III and Audrey Wrenn. UAB Center for Clinical and Translational Science Mentoring Contract.

(<http://www.uab.edu/ccts/TrainingAndEduc/Documents/Mentor%20Contract%20-%203%20pages.pdf>)

https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.gwis.org/resource/resmgr/files/mentor_mentee_agreement_-_ex.pdf