

University of Bolton

MENTORING ACADEMY



A guide for Mentors and Mentees

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Introduction

The University of Bolton has a Mentoring Academy originally launched in 2017. This is a guide for all colleagues wanting to be involved in the mentoring process, to ensure they understand what is involved in Mentoring and how to achieve maximum benefit from a mentoring relationship.

Foreword from Chris McClelland – Chief People Officer

As a knowledge business we understand the benefits of developing colleagues through sharing of knowledge, skills and experience. This can be effectively done via an experienced and skilled mentor and can lead to enhanced innovation and performance within the University.

Here at the University, we take a developmental approach to mentoring - based on helping the mentee with the quality of their thinking around issues that are important to them. It is not necessarily about fast tracking the mentee in their career, a talent management approach or about identifying developmental needs. It is about supporting the mentees' learning and development, particularly as they experience some sort of change and/or other challenges in their work.

This is very much where our Mentoring Academy – a formal network of mentors from across the University with generalist / specialist focus - comes in.

I hope you find this guide useful.

What is the Mentoring Academy?

There is a long tradition of mentoring at University of Bolton, and the aim of the Mentoring Academy is to strengthen the University's mentoring provision which is available for all in the UoB community.

The Academy is open to all new and existing employees (whether in an academic or a professional support role) and consists of a network of trained mentors who meet regularly to discuss generic themes. It can also support colleagues to deliver excellence for standards and quality identified by both the Research Excellence Framework (REF) and Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF)

The Mentoring Academy can provide mentors for employees who are:

- New to the University / Higher Education
- New to a managerial role
- Undertaking a new post
- Undertaking the Postgraduate Certificate in Teaching and Learning in Higher and Professional Education, and/or working towards Advance HE professional recognition
- Undertaking duties that are new to them (including research, writing publications and/or postgraduate research supervision, undertaking TIRI roles)
- In need of the support of a mentor to help them progress other aspects of their professional development / course of professional study - especially those from underrepresented backgrounds

What is Mentoring?

Mentoring in the workplace describes a relationship in which a more experienced colleague shares their greater knowledge to support the development of an inexperienced individual. (CIPD, 23).

This should not be mistaken for coaching, training or counselling.

Here are some definitions:

Training: helping an individual or group develop cognitive skills and capabilities

Counselling: helping an individual to improve performance by resolving situations from the past

Coaching: helping another person to improve awareness, to set and achieve goals in order to improve a particular behavioural performance

To sum this up:

"A coach has some great questions for your answers; a mentor has some great answers for your questions."

In the University of Bolton Mentoring Academy, the mentoring relationship has two parties, a Mentor and Mentee, who meet monthly or bi-monthly to discuss a range of issues. Mentoring is a protected relationship in which meaningful discussions, learning and experimentation can occur, potential skills can be developed and results measured as competences.

“The Mentor is a more experienced individual willing to share his/her knowledge with someone less experienced, in a relationship of mutual trust.” (David Clutterbuck.)

The relationship should:

• Be ongoing	• Be non-threatening, yet challenging
• Have no line management connection	• Enhance career development
• Have an agenda set by the Mentee	• Support other HR and Learning and Development initiatives
• Have an element of coaching	• Benefit all parties, though usually in different ways
• Be work related	• Be able to access different support, networking or contact structures
• Facilitate new career directions	• Act as a catalyst
• Be developmental	• Build morale
• Be confidential	• Build self esteem

Benefits of Mentoring

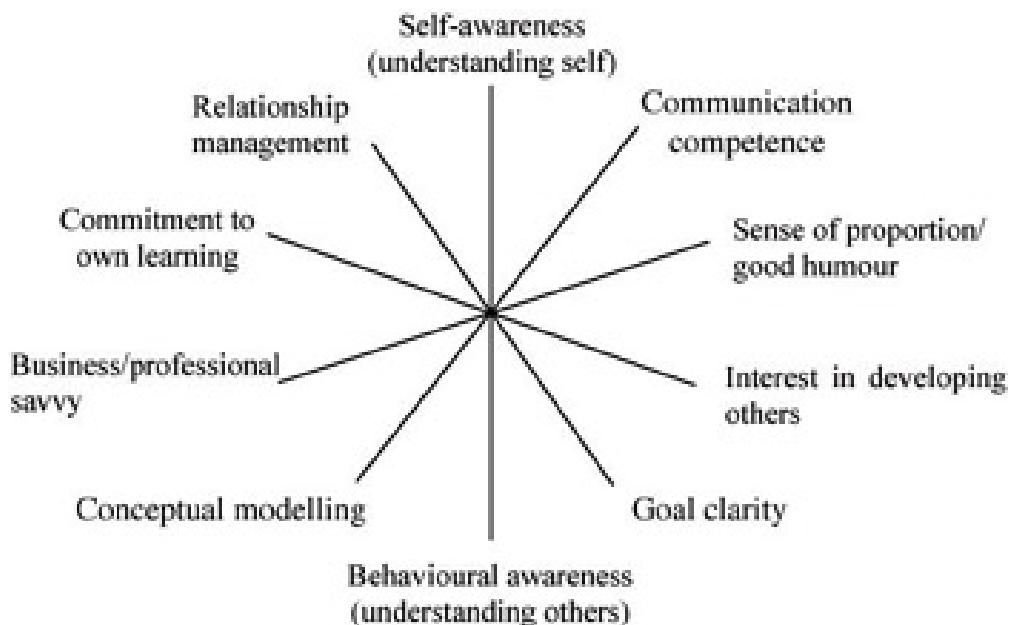
- **For the Mentee**Improved self confidence
 - Sounding board for ideas
 - Integration into the organisation for a new employee
 - Helping develop better interpersonal skills, such as handling conflict
 - Supporting an individual's potential and providing career support
 - Developing a more strategic perspective after a promotion
 - Dealing with the impact of change on an individual's role
 - Increased job satisfaction
 - Increased learning from the exposure to new ideas
 - Can influence downwards through the Mentee
 - Gain flexibility in dealing with different people
 - Can develop Mentee to be a successor and facilitate their own job advancement
 - Can gain additional qualifications, adding to their personal value
 - Provide additional evidence towards professional recognition
- **For the Mentee and Mentor**
 - Adds to and develops personal value
 - Enhances self esteem
 - Develops management skills
 - Enhances personal development
 - Increases personal effectiveness
 - Facilitates new career directions
 - Accesses different support, networking or contact structures
 - Facilitates job progression and job satisfaction
 - Acts as a catalyst for action
 - Builds morale and self-esteem
 - Creates a new level of support
- **For the Organisation**
 - Enhances the transfer of skills
 - Identifies key competencies
 - Facilitates the onboarding process of new employees
 - Talent spotting mechanism by identifying potential within people
 - Gives recruitment and retention benefits
 - Aids improved organisational communication
 - Improves management and leadership succession
 - Improves management and corporate culture
 - Can support, enhance and embed the TIRI philosophy at UoB
 - Can be a stabilising factor in times of organisation and personal change
 - Allows empowered people to check ideas in the light of decreased management
 - Facilitates lateral job progression and job satisfaction
 - Reinforces learning initiatives
 - Develops management skills
 - Increases personal effectiveness
 - Creates a 'feel good' atmosphere within the organisation

Who Should Be Mentors?

There is much evidence to show that if a person is coerced or forced to be a Mentor then the relationship will not work, therefore willingness and interest are of the utmost priority. Mentors tend to be knowledgeable, practiced people, willing to share their expertise and not be undermined by the Mentee's potential to equal or surpass them. A key factor for an effective Mentor is the ability to provide access to organisational resources. Mentors need to be proficient in a number of roles, each with their own integral skills.

Key competencies and the role of the Mentor

Clutterbuck highlighted ten key competencies of a Mentor



Self-awareness (understanding self)

Mentors need high self-awareness in order to recognise and manage their own behaviours within the helping relationship and to use empathy appropriately. The activist, task-focused manager often has relatively little insight into these areas - indeed, he or she may actively avoid reflection on such issues, depicting them as 'soft' and of low priority. Such attitudes and learned behaviours may be difficult to break.

Behavioural awareness (understanding others)

Like self-awareness, understanding how others behave and why they do so is a classic component of emotional intelligence. To help others manage their relationships, the mentor must have reasonably good insight into patterns of behaviour between individuals

and groups of people. Predicting the consequences of specific behaviours or courses of action is one of the many practical applications of this insight.

Developing clearer insight into the behaviours of others comes from frequent observation and reflection.

Organisation or professional savvy

There is not a great deal to be done here in the short term - there are very few shortcuts to experience and judgement. However, the facilitator can help the potential mentor understand the need for developing judgement and plan how to acquire relevant experience.

Again, the art of purposeful reflection is a valuable support in building this competence. By reviewing the learning from a variety of experiences, the manager widens their range of templates and develops a sense of patterns in events. The more frequently he or she is able to combine stretching experience with focused reflection - either internally or in a dialogue with others - the more substantial and rapid the acquisition of judgement.

Sense of proportion/good humour

Is good humour a competence? Clutterbuck would argue it is. Laughter, used appropriately, is invaluable in developing rapport, in helping people to see matters from a different perspective, in releasing emotional tension. It is also important that mentor and mentee should enjoy the sessions they have together. Enthusiasm is far more closely associated with learning than boredom is!

Communication competence

Communication is not a single skill: it is a combination of a number of skills. Those most important for the mentor include:

- Listening - opening the mind to what the other person is saying, demonstrating interest/attention, encouraging them to speak, holding back on filling the silences
- Observing as receiver - being open to the visual and other non-verbal signals, recognising what is not said
- Parallel processing - analysing what the other person is saying, reflecting on it, preparing responses; effective communicators do all of these in parallel, slowing down the dialogue as needed to ensure that they do not overemphasise preparing responses at the expense of analysis and reflection; equally, they avoid becoming so mired in their internal thoughts that they respond inadequately or too slowly
- Projecting - crafting words and their emotional 'wrapping' in a manner appropriate for the situation and the recipient(s)
- Observing as projector - being open to the visual and other non-verbal signals, as clues to what the recipient is hearing/understanding; adapting tone, volume, pace and language appropriately

- Exiting - concluding a dialogue or segment of dialogue with clarity and alignment of understanding (ensuring that the message has been received in both directions). Good mentors will generally need a strong sense of situation and a high degree of adaptability between styles.

Conceptual modelling

Effective mentors have a portfolio of models they can draw upon to help mentees understand the issues they face. These models can be self-generated (e.g., the result of personal experience), drawn from elsewhere (e.g., models of company structure, interpersonal behaviours, strategic planning, career planning) or - at the highest level of competence - generated on the spot as an immediate response.

Commitment to one's own continued learning

Effective mentors become role models for self-managed learning. They seize opportunities to experiment and take part in new experiences. They read widely and are reasonably efficient at setting and following personal development plans. They actively seek and use behavioural feedback from others.

These skills can be developed with practice. Again, having a role model to follow for themselves is a good starting-point.

Strong interest in developing others

Effective mentors have an innate interest in achieving through others and in helping others recognise and achieve their potential. This instinctive response is important in establishing and maintaining rapport and in enthusing the mentee, building confidence in what they could become.

While it is possible to 'switch on' someone to the self-advantage of helping others, it is probably not feasible to stimulate an altruistic response.

Building and maintaining rapport/relationship management

The skills of rapport-building are difficult to define. When asked to describe rapport in their experience, managers' observations can be distilled into five characteristics:

- Trust - Will they do what they say? Will they keep confidences?
- Focus - Are they concentrating on me? Are they listening without judging?
- Empathy - Do they have goodwill towards me? Do they try to understand my feelings, and viewpoints?
- Congruence - Do they acknowledge and accept my goals?
- Empowerment - Is their help aimed at helping me stand on my own feet as soon as is practical?

To a considerable extent, the skills of building and maintaining rapport are contained in the other competencies already described. However, additional help in developing

rappor- building skills may be provided through situational analysis - creating opportunities for the individual to explore with other people how and why he or she feels comfortable and uncomfortable with them in various circumstances. This kind of self-knowledge can be invaluable in developing more sensitive responses to other people's needs and emotions.

Goal clarity

The mentor must be able to help the mentee sort out what they want to achieve and why. This is quite hard to do if you do not have the skills to set and pursue clear goals of your own.

Goal clarity appears to derive from a mixture of skills including systematic analysis and decisiveness. Like so many of the other mentoring competencies, it may best be developed through opportunities to reflect and to practise.

The Mentor does not take the place of the line manager and the mentoring relationship should not be used as a substitute for the normal management processes. It is the Mentor's responsibility to ensure that the Mentee's relationship with their line manager is not diminished by the mentoring relationship. With the Mentee's prior permission, the Mentor and line manager may, if they wish, discuss any issues of particular concern, such as the Mentee's future career aspirations.

Mentors for PG Certificate in Teaching & Learning in Higher Education

If you are mentor for a student on the above course you will need to understand the specific mentoring guidance for these roles. Please contact Rose Childs, Senior Lecturer – Education – R.Childs@bolton.ac.uk

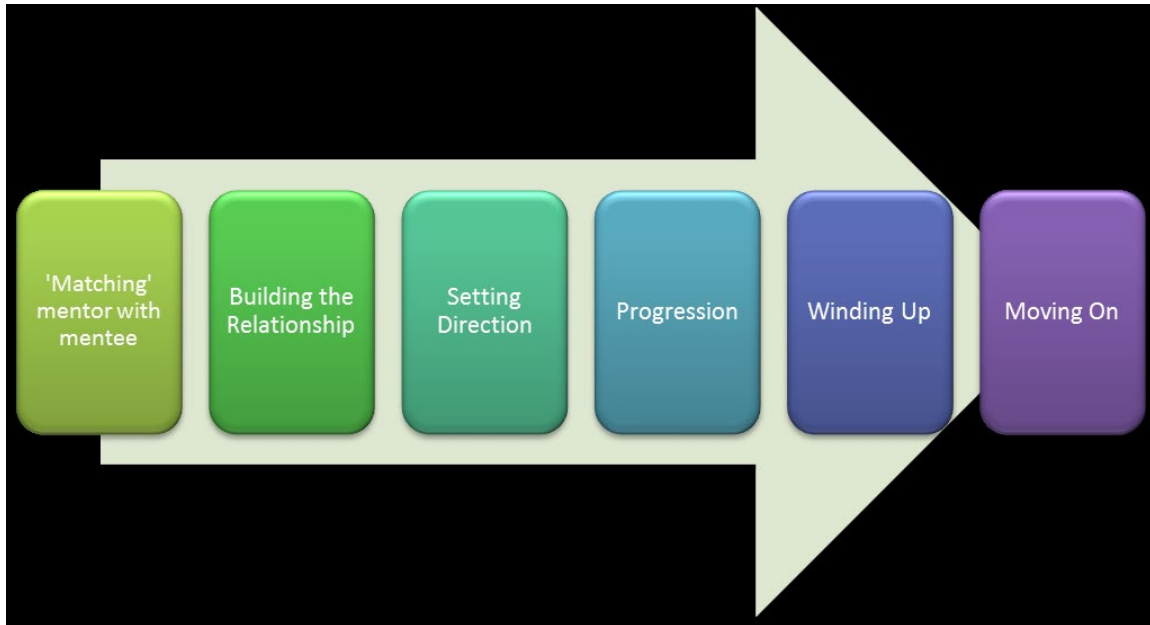
Role of the Mentee

The mentee's role is to own the relationship. Whilst the mentor is interested and supportive, the mentee's development is their responsibility and they need to manage the relationship by:

- Taking the initiative and arranging the meetings
- Managing the agenda
- Setting objectives to work to and reviewing these regularly with the mentor
- Taking action based on what they agreed during the mentoring discussion
- Reviewing the action that they have taken and the results with their mentor
- Being open to feedback

Mentoring in Practice

This is the journey that a mentee will follow as part of the University of Bolton Mentoring Academy. This will be explored later in the guide.



What will you receive as a mentor?

Every mentor will attend a Mentor briefing session before they take on a mentee. A networking/Action Learning set will be formed where all mentors can meet quarterly to share ideas, experiences and help each other through the process.

What is the commitment required from a Mentor?

As part of a Mentor's role, it is expected that they will commit to the following:

- Touch base monthly with the mentee
- Meet regularly. i.e., once per month or as alternatively agreed for 1/ 1.5 hrs
- Commit to the UoB Mentoring Academy for a minimum 12 – 18 months
- Attend any networking events with other Mentors
- Attend the Mentoring briefing session and be formally confirmed as a Mentor
- Support leadership/development activities as required

Mentors vs the Line Manager

Managers have, as their primary concerns, the achievement of task results, outputs and the training and development of their team to achieve those outcomes. Mentors on the other hand, are unencumbered by such issues when helping to develop mentees. Accordingly, their work with mentees is driven by a concern with the development of the individual as an individual in either the short or the long term, rather than as a means to achieve outputs. The different priorities are summarised below.

Line Manager	Mentor
Sets objectives	Agrees goals
Gets job done today	Aims at getting job done better tomorrow
Concerned with standards, deadlines, budgets	Concerned with career aspirations, development needs
Monitors for control	Monitors for progress
Takes opportunities	Creates opportunities
Probably has a similar background	Can come from any background
Sees role more as providing answers	Sees role more as asking questions
Provides feedback <i>and</i> analysis	Provides feedback <i>for</i> analysis
Always has direct, formal line manager responsibility that influences the relationship	Need not have any authority (direct or indirect) to influence the relationship
Supports the development of team members, which may include coaching techniques	Identifies development opportunities
Has other team members to consider	Concerned only with the individual mentee

Clearly, some of the above examples can be debated in particular circumstances and individual cases can be cited that do not correspond with such polarised positions but they do serve to help demonstrate and explain the different pressures.

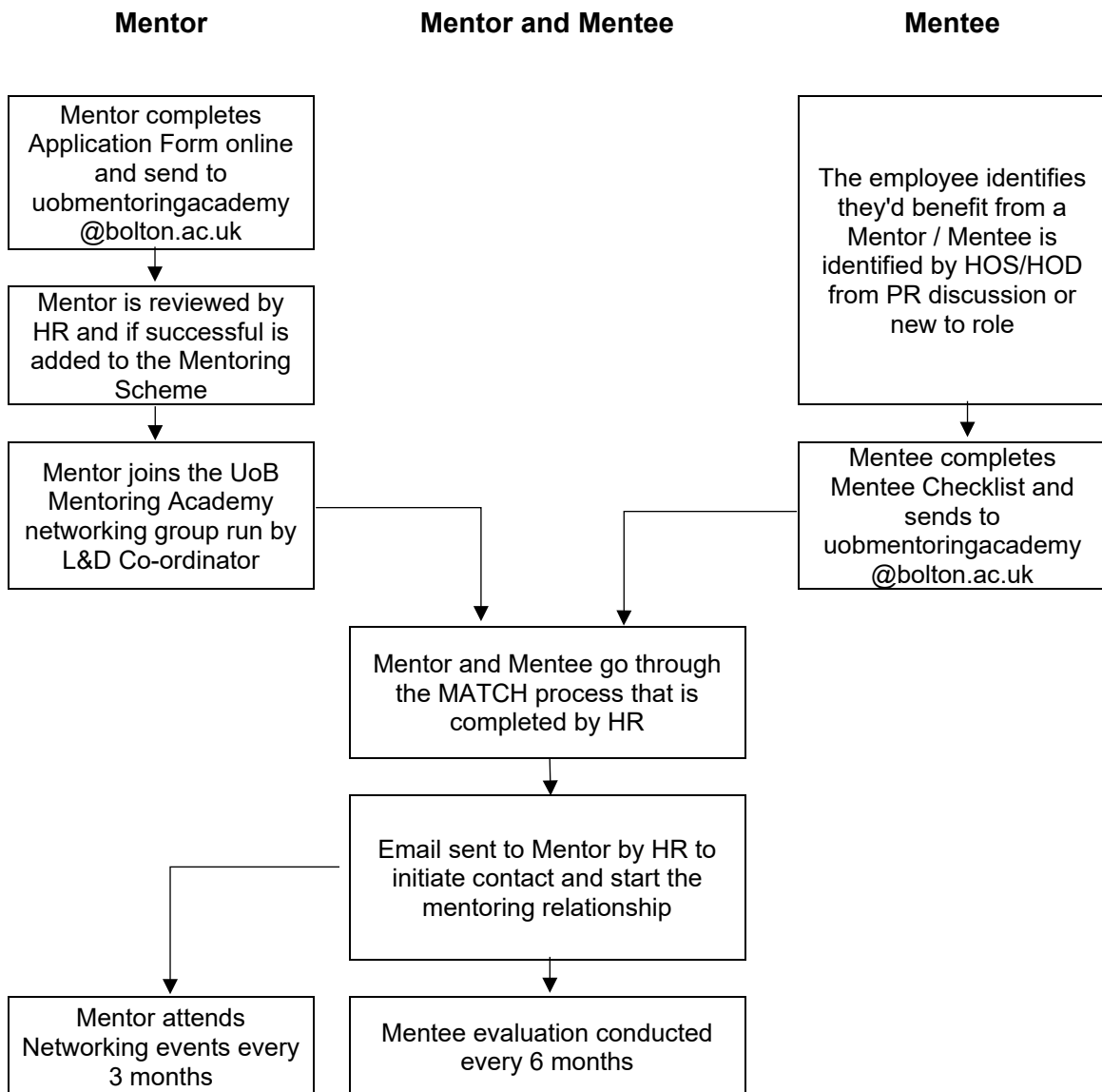
Equally, there are many people who are very capable when undertaking both roles for the same person. What they do need to be able to do, however, is to distinguish between the two roles and recognise when they need to be “wearing which hat”. Similarly, the individual employee/mentee needs to be confident that their Line Manager will be able to remove the boss’ hat and don the mentor’s hat when appropriate.

An additional role of a mentor that can only be fulfilled when they are not the line manager is to provide any help that the mentee may need in managing their manager. A great many

mentor/mentee conversations will revolve around the mentee/manager relationship: how to cope with pressure from the manager, how to encourage the manager to delegate more, etc.

The Mentor/Mentee Process

As part of the Mentoring process, an important first step is matching the mentor with the mentee. Here is how the application process will work.



The Meetings

The initial meeting will last for approximately two hours and will cover the Mentoring Agreement and setting the Ground Rules and Objectives. Subsequent meetings will set the direction and be spent investigating projects to stimulate learning as well as increase visibility of existing and potential roles, etc.

In all cases the meetings will be totally confidential, and any discussion involving a third party must be with the knowledge and permission of both parties.

It is recommended that the Mentee keeps a diary to act as a prompt or reminder of issues to discuss which may be different to the agreed agenda.

The First Meeting

The first meeting will set the tone of the future mentoring relationship and some preparation by both parties is important. The relationship should develop swiftly and smoothly if both Mentor and Mentee are well prepared.

Since mentoring relationships can last for a relatively long time, it is useful to have some kind of formal definition of the rules. It is also essential to the success of the mentoring relationship that both parties discuss their expectations during the first meeting.

The Mentoring Agreement & Relationship Ground rules

In order that both parties are working towards the same end, it is advisable that mentoring relationships have some form of mentoring agreement and ground rules. The mentoring agreement acts as a guarantee of the trust that is essential to an effective mentoring relationship. It can be tailored to meet the individual needs of the particular pairing, but should reflect codes of conduct and values that make up the ground rules of the relationship as agreed by the mentor and the Mentee.

NB: It is advisable to formalise the agreement in a written document.

As previously mentioned, a standard mentoring agreement can be adapted to meet the individual needs of a particular relationship but it is important to ensure that certain basic principles, fundamental to any mentoring relationship, are included. This mentoring agreement can be a statement or a more informal set of bullet points, whichever suits the relationship best.

Ground rules usually cover confidentiality, responsibility, frequency of meetings, personal issues, Mentor / Mentee time, mentor's authority.

UoB Mentoring Academy Code of Conduct

Both mentor and mentee will abide by the following code of conduct and act in a way which respects diversity and promotes equality of opportunity.

- The mentor will respond to the needs of the mentee and not impose their own agenda
- Mentors and mentees will respect each other's time availability, as agreed in the Mentoring Agreement, ensuring that they do not impose beyond what is acceptable to each other
- Either party may end the relationship at any time
- The mentor will not pry into areas that the mentee wishes to keep private. They should help the mentee to recognise how these areas may impact on professional areas
- Mentors and mentees will share the responsibility for the smooth winding down of the relationship, once it has achieved its purpose
- The relationship should not be exploitive in any way
- Mentors should never work beyond the bounds of their capability, experience and expertise. Where appropriate, mentors should seek advice from HR or Senior Mentor

Confidentiality

The successful partnership between the mentor and mentee is based on trust, honesty and confidentiality. Both mentor and mentee agree that they will:

- Keep any information shared between themselves confidential (unless any issues are raised which may place either party in a vulnerable situation)
- Immediately pass on any information which makes either party concerned about the personal safety of the other or another individual
- Maintain confidentiality about all personal issues discussed, both during the relationship and also once it has ended
- Understand that if either party chooses to end the relationship, that both parties are still expected to keep shared information confidential at all times and must never discuss the details of any mentoring relationship in which they have been involved

Some Common Examples of Ground Rules are:

- The relationship is totally confidential and neither party will share information discussed without express permission of the other party
- The Mentor will only discuss items of a personal nature if agreed by both parties
- Neither party will make excessive demands upon the time of the other
- The overall responsibility for progressing the relationship lies with the Mentee
- The Mentor will help and support the Mentee to work towards agreed career goals and learning objectives
- The Mentee will work towards achieving their agreed goals and objectives, justifying the faith placed in him / her by the Mentor
- The Mentee will only use the Mentor's authority with their permission

The Mentoring Agreement and Ground Rules can be modified by agreement as and when requested in order to reflect achievements and new objectives. This enables the parties to review and evaluate their progress.

Preparation for the First Meeting

Before the first meeting it is useful for both parties to consider completing the following:

- What can I do before we meet?
- What do we need to cover?
- What are my short- and long-term expectations of the relationship?
- Are they realistic?
- What do I feel are the roles and responsibilities of both parties?
- How can I ascertain what both parties want from the relationship before finalising the mentoring agreement?
- Should there be any special features of this relationship? If so what?
- Which Ground Rules do I consider essential?
- Do I want a formal Mentoring Agreement? Why / Why not?
- How often do we meet?
- What can / can't we discuss?
- Where do we meet? In / out of the office?
- Who's in charge?
- Does the Mentor tell me what to do?
- When do we meet? Worktime / outside?
- Do we keep records?

What else needs to be covered during the first meeting?

The agenda for the first meeting may include some or all of the following:

- A brief description of the mentor's own managerial background, career path and current job
- Discussion of the parameters of the relationship via a brief discussion of the issues raised by the Mentoring Agreement and a commitment to a draft Mentoring Agreement that both agree
- Discussion of career aspirations. The Mentee is unlikely to trust the Mentor sufficiently at this stage to be completely frank, but it at least opens the topic up and gives the Mentee something to think about
- Some discussion of present work load of both parties to ensure any commitments can be kept without interfering with day-to-day duties
- The meeting should end on a positive note with a number of action points that form the first objectives of the newly formed relationship

Setting Objectives

The final point on the example Agenda includes agreeing an Action Plan that forms the first objectives of the Mentoring relationship. More detailed objectives can be identified as the relationship develops and needs change, but the first meeting should tackle some of the issues and set some initial objectives.

Setting Development Tasks

Part of the Mentor's role is to help the Mentee to develop new skills, competencies, adapt new behaviours, etc., and there are some guidelines to consider when doing this.

Some typical questions to consider when setting development tasks are:

- What are the key areas, in which the Mentee needs to develop skills and competences to enhance career potential?
- What tasks or projects could be assigned to the Mentee, which would give specific experience and enable them to gain a track record in each of those areas?
- In whose areas of responsibility do those tasks fall?
- How can that individual be persuaded to endorse the task? Will they need to become actively involved i.e., as a client?
- What processes does the Mentee need to master in order to carry out those tasks?
- What forms of learning are available to help the Mentee master those processes, e.g., courses, distance learning, books, videos, centres of advice and secondments?
- What thinking patterns / attitudes does the Mentee need to develop to reinforce the processes?
- How can these best be acquired?
- How will the Mentee fit the task in with their day-to-day responsibilities? (Is it necessary to gain endorsement of his/her line manager?)
- What is a realistic time period for each development area to be achieved?
- An understanding of the learning requirements?
- Mastery of the basics?
- Full competence?
- How will the achievement of each of these development objectives be measured at each of these milestones?

The Evolution of the Relationship

Once the first meeting between the Mentor and the Mentee has occurred, the relationship should develop swiftly and smoothly.

The mentoring relationship typically has four distinct phases. This is linked to the previous diagram on page 8 – Mentoring in Practice – The Journey.

- **The start of the relationship – rapport building & setting direction**

During the first six months or so of a successful relationship, both Mentor and Mentee are getting to know each other and building trust. During this phase of the relationship the Mentee may have an unrealistically high opinion of the Mentor, who is seen as someone of considerable standing in the organisation. At this time, both parties are forming expectations of one another as together they tackle short-term objectives with varying degrees of success. Their early interaction lays the foundations for the next phase of the relationship.

- **The middle period – progression and maturation**

This is often the most rewarding for the two parties. Discussions between them now center less on defining general objectives than on strategies and tactics to achieve them. Project work, which the Mentor helps the Mentee to set for him or herself, is aimed both at developing skills and at assessing how well they have been absorbed. The mutual trust that develops between the two gives the Mentee confidence to challenge the Mentor's ideas, just as his or her own are challenged by the Mentor.

- **Dissolving the relationship – winding up and moving on**

After some time, the mentoring relationship begins to draw apart. It is essential during this phase of the relationship that the Mentor “let's go” of the Mentee, who must now operate with complete independence. If the Mentor tries to hold on beyond the natural life of the mentoring relationship it can cause damage to the success of the pairing. If the Mentee tries to prolong the relationship beyond its natural term, then he or she may grow to resent this dependency. The Mentee now no longer needs the mentor.

- **Redefining the relationship**

Both Mentor and Mentee continue to have some form of interaction, although it is on a more casual basis and is usually restricted to specific projects. The relationship enters a new stage, where the Mentee and Mentor regard each other

as equals. If and when the two become peers in the organisation, some uncertainty and discomfort may occur as they adjust to the new relationship.

Feedback

The University welcomes feedback from those participating in the Mentoring Academy and in relation to this document. Please forward comments to uobmentoringacademy@bolton.ac.uk .

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