



University of  
St Andrews

# The Elizabeth Garrett Mentoring Programme

Handbook for mentees



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## Authorship

This handbook draws throughout on materials originally developed for the Early Career Academics' Mentoring Scheme by Gaye Mainwaring, Martin Williams, Lorraine Walsh and Catriona Wilson. These materials have been updated and supplemented for this handbook by Jos Finer.

With thanks to Simon Haslam at FMR Research and Professor Paul Hibbert for their advice and contributions.

# Introduction from the Principal

Dear Colleague,

This Elizabeth Garrett mentoring programme is a new scheme in the University of St Andrews for mid-career academic women. We hope it will assist in addressing the representation of women at senior levels of academia, but we also hope that it will be personally beneficial to our mentees, and also to their mentors.

I know from long personal experience both as a mentee and as a mentor that mentoring really is an effective and rewarding way to undertake or support professional development at different stages of your life and career.

I hope that through participation in this programme you will have a valuable experience, whether as a mentee or a mentor. And I hope that you will also have a positive story to tell, which will encourage others to participate in this and other mentoring programmes.

This handbook is not intended to be prescriptive; it is provided as a resource to which you can refer at any point during your mentoring partnership. It offers useful commentary on different approaches to participation in a mentoring relationship, and suggestions on how you can ensure that your partnership works as productively as possible.

We are keen to support participants during the year, and the Elizabeth Garrett Mentoring team will be available to help with any queries. Contact details can be found at the back of the handbook.

I will also be hosting a networking event for mentees each semester.

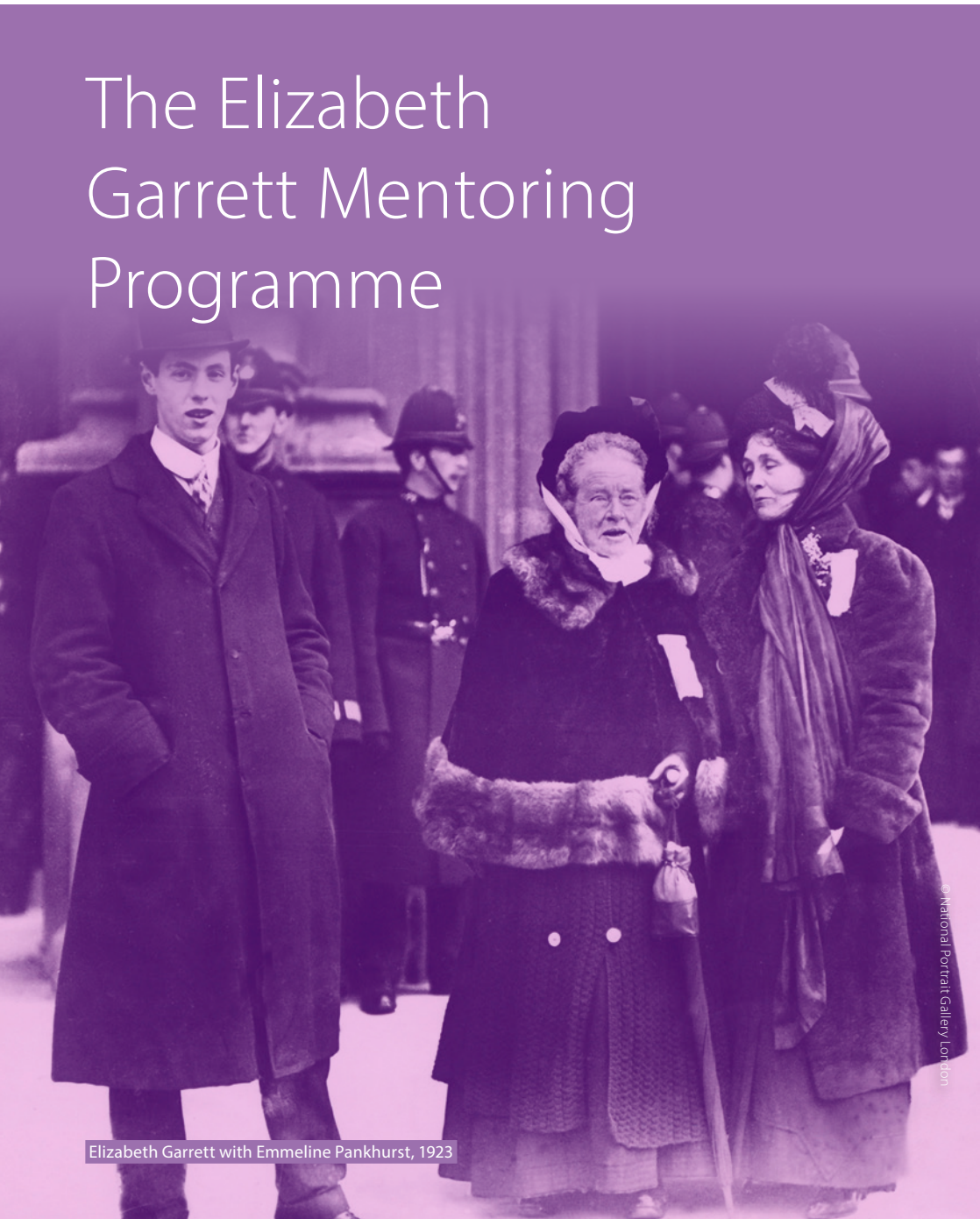
We will carry out formal evaluation of the programme, but we would also welcome your informal feedback and your suggestions for how we can develop the programme in the future.

I wish you good luck for a successful mentoring partnership, and I look forward to hearing about your experiences on the programme.

**Professor Sally Mapstone**

Principal and Vice-Chancellor

# The Elizabeth Garrett Mentoring Programme



Elizabeth Garrett with Emmeline Pankhurst, 1923

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## Programme outline



### Elizabeth Garrett

This programme is named in recognition of Elizabeth Garrett, who in 1862 became the first woman to matriculate at the University of St Andrews. Her name was later struck from the list of students and she was prevented from attending medical classes.

Nevertheless, her determination paved the way for other women, and she herself went on to accomplish great things, including becoming the first woman to qualify as a physician in Britain, co-founding the first hospital staffed by women, and becoming Dean of the London School of Medicine for Women.

As a role model to many women who subsequently qualified in medicine and to women academics in general it is fitting that this programme is named in Elizabeth Garrett's honour.

### Purpose of the programme

The establishment of this scheme acknowledges the need to increase representation of women at senior levels of academia, including at St Andrews, and seeks to address this inequality. It aims to help women achieve their true potential in whatever capacity. It recognises that there should be no obstacles for women of ability.

### Mentor and mentee roles

Mentors may be members of the Principal's Office, Deans and Heads of School (current and previous), Directors of Research and Directors of Teaching from larger Schools as well as Professors. Mentors may be male or female.

Mentees will be female academics wishing to benefit from a mentoring partnership in order to prepare for leadership roles, manage current leadership responsibilities, or develop

leadership capabilities that can be applied in other roles.

### Eligibility

Mentee applicants will be women in academic roles, who are (normally) post-probationary and at Senior Lecturer (or equivalent research grade) or above, including Professors.

### Duration

Partnerships will be supported for an initial period of one year. Partnerships may be extended for an additional year.

### Scheme size

Eligible staff from all academic Schools are invited to apply. The scheme size is limited and will be reviewed on an annual basis. It may not, therefore, be possible to match all mentee applicants.

**“Your self-reflection can actually begin with the application process – in itself, it’s a great opportunity to take stock of where you are now and what you might be looking for in the years ahead...”**

*Mentee, 2017-2018 cycle*

### **Apply to join the programme**

If you wish to apply to join the programme as a mentee, and you meet the eligibility criteria above, you should visit the programme webpage and follow the link to the sign-up form. Once you submit the form you will receive an immediate acknowledgment on-screen and will receive a further acknowledgment by email.

### **Key dates**

A full timeline with key dates is available on the programme webpage, and on the Guidance Notes for Applicants.

### **Selection**

After the closing date mentee applications will be reviewed by a selection panel which includes the Principal. This panel will agree the selection of mentee applicants to go forward for matching into mentoring partnerships. The intention is that there will be least one mentee per School, but this will be subject to applicant numbers, suitability and distribution across Schools.

All mentee applicants will be notified of the outcome, and applicants who are not taken forward for matching will be offered a place on a specially developed career planning workshop.

### **Matching**

When matching mentors and mentees, the panel will consider the statements made by mentees about their reasons for joining the programme, and about what they hope to gain from participation. These are considered alongside the experience and background of the potential mentoring partners.

The matching panel will do their best to respect any stated preferences and will also make a judgement about compatibility based both on their knowledge of the individuals concerned and on the information provided in member profiles.

In all cases, a mentor will be offered to the mentee and the mentee will be able to review the offer and decide whether they think the proposed mentor is the right person to work with them on their developmental goals. The final decision, therefore, rests with the mentee.

Note also that the mentor is not informed about a proposed partnership until it has been accepted by the mentee.

## What does participation in this programme involve?

### **Guidance, briefing sessions and support**

In addition to this handbook, further support for both mentors and mentees will be provided by CAPOD.

Once mentoring partnerships have been confirmed, all matched participants will attend a short briefing session before their first meeting. Participants who have already attended a similar briefing as part of existing schemes will not be expected to attend.

An optional networking event for participants will be hosted by the Principal each semester. Additional activities and events may be scheduled during the year.

### **Time commitment**

The exact nature of the time commitment involved will be subject to agreement between the partners in each mentoring relationship. As a guide, we suggest that partnerships have four 90-minute meetings during the year (or equivalent). However, partners may agree to other arrangements and may choose to change this agreement during the life of the partnership.

### **Entering into a partnership**

Each participant enters the scheme for their own reasons, with unique circumstances and individual objectives, which may change as the mentoring partnership progresses.

To this end, we want to keep the scheme flexible and centred on the needs of each individual mentee. Partners are expected to establish their own rules around their relationship in terms of commitment,

frequency of meetings, methods of communication and roles.

We anticipate, however, that for almost everyone the scheme will involve a process of discussing, clarifying and setting objectives and agreeing ground rules. These issues should be discussed early on in the relationship – ideally at the first meeting.

### **Documenting meetings**

Whether the meetings are documented or not is entirely up to the partners to agree. However, some written record of the initial discussion around objectives and ground rules will be a useful reference point as the partnership evolves. This can be done by using a ‘mentoring agreement’. A sample agreement, along with guidance on its use is included in this handbook.

### **Evaluation**

Evaluation of the programme is conducted at three levels:

**Firstly:** at the mid-point of the cycle, qualitative feedback is sought from all participants both about the process and their experience with the scheme to date.

**Secondly:** after the end of the cycle, a short survey is conducted to obtain qualitative and quantitative feedback from all participants.

**Finally:** one year after completion of partnerships, mentees will be re-surveyed and a sample of interviews conducted to obtain more detailed feedback on the impact of the programme.

# Defining mentoring



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## What is 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.

Mentoring has been given a variety of definitions, but the important principle is that we understand what the University means by 'mentoring'.

For the purposes of this scheme our definition is: 'mentoring is a time-limited developmental relationship between colleagues, one of whom will be more experienced.'

In this section we provide further detail by discussing the similarities, and differences, between mentoring and coaching. This reflects the view that mentoring requires a flexible approach, responsive to the needs of the mentee and drawing on the knowledge and experience of the mentor as well as their mentoring skills, such as listening, questioning, challenging, problem solving and analysis.

### Different developmental partnerships

Two of the most commonly used developmental partnerships in the workplace are mentoring and coaching. They share some common features, but also have some important differences:

**Progress focused:** coaching and mentoring are both focused on defining developmental goals and then addressing these goals in a collaborative way to make progress towards achieving them.

This is sometimes referred to as 'solutions-focused', but this implies that there is a problem to solve, which is not always the case. The important thing is that, with the aid of the mentor, the mentee can clarify goals and make progress. This means that action is an important component of the mentoring relationship. Without action, progress cannot be made.

	Mentoring	Coaching
Focused on progress or solutions	✓	✓
Relates to 'now' and 'future'	✓	✓
Uses techniques to allow the subject to develop their own understanding, and their own solutions	✓	✓
Uses personal experience to provide advice, guidance and to make suggestions	✓	✗

## What is mentoring? *continued*

**The 'now' and the 'future':** mentoring and coaching also share a focus on 'where are you now?', 'where do you want to be?', 'how will you get there?', and 'what actions can you take to move from the position now to the desired future position?'

**Who holds the solution?:** mentoring tends to be a flexible process, based on responding to the needs of the mentee, during which the mentor may adopt different roles, or adopt different approaches, as needs and circumstances change.

In the workplace, a coach will generally be trained or qualified specifically for this role, and will be competent in using a range of approaches and techniques consistent with their particular brand of coaching.

The workplace coaching offered at the University of St Andrews is based on the principles of 'performance coaching', sometimes referred to as 'pure coaching'. This is based on the overriding belief that the coachee, not the coach, holds the solutions. It is the role of the coach to facilitate a process which enables the coachee to understand the problem, to identify the possible solutions and to choose and commit to a particular course of action.

Using this approach, a coach will not usually offer advice or guidance, but will help the coachee to develop their own understanding and move towards a solution by using techniques (such as specific types of questions) to challenge and reframe thinking.

A coach is, therefore, not normally someone with greater experience in the same field of endeavour, but someone trained and qualified in using a specific set of techniques.

**The benefit of experience:** a mentor, however, is not so constrained and may draw on and share their experience as a route to achieving the mentee's goals. This may mean providing advice, guidance, and making suggestions in a way which a coach, as described above, would generally avoid.

Mentoring can make very effective use of coaching techniques and approaches, some of which are included in this handbook, but a coach would be unlikely to adopt some of the approaches open to a mentor.

A mentoring partnership can therefore include wide-ranging discussions, where the mentor uses a variety of skills and during which they may adopt various different roles.

## Underlying principles of mentoring

There are a number of underlying principles that are important for effective mentoring, which will apply to this scheme:

**Voluntary participation:** mentoring schemes are most effective where both mentees and mentors participate because they want to and not because they have been compelled to. However, participation will be encouraged and we will communicate the potential benefits to both mentors and mentees during the launch process.

**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.

In practical terms this means that the mentee will indicate what they want to gain from participation and any preferences about their mentoring partner, which will inform the matching process. They will also have the final say about whether they wish to proceed with a proposed mentor.

Once a partnership is established, this means that the content of mentoring discussions should be determined by the needs of the mentee and that the mentee should take responsibility for contacting the mentor, scheduling meetings and making sure they happen.

**Collaborative:** mentoring is a collaborative developmental partnership. Both partners should 'own' the process and work together to help the mentee to progress and work towards achieving developmental goals.

**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.

**Confidentiality and trust:** successful partnerships are built on mutual trust and agreed boundaries of confidentiality. The scheme coordinators will not, therefore, request detailed feedback on the content of discussions that take place; this will remain within the partnership. Feedback on the process and outcomes, however, will be sought and will help to evaluate the impact of the scheme.

## Expectations

As well as the underlying principles of mentoring, we ask participants also to consider a number of expectations associated with taking part in this scheme:

**Matching:** mentors agreeing to join the scheme do so on the understanding that there will be a matching process to assign a mentee, based on the information provided by both parties, and that it will be the mentee who will make the decision about proceeding.

**Protected time:** participants are making a time commitment and are expected to follow through with this. Mentoring meetings should be protected time, focused entirely on the mentee and on progressing the partnership.

**Responsibility:** participants must take responsibility for their role in a partnership and for abiding by agreements made between the partners. In particular, mentees must take responsibility for undertaking agreed actions, as the progress of the partnership and achievement of developmental goals is dependent on this.

“My mentor has been fantastic both at listening and at asking challenging questions, which develop my own thinking. He does offer advice sometimes, but he prefers to help lead me to my own solutions... or to new questions. As a result, I feel that I have really put my career and my aspirations under the microscope. One concrete result of this is that I really do know myself better than I did at the start of the process – both what my strengths and weaknesses are but also what I enjoy and get fired up by – which really helps decision-making and future career planning.”

*Mentee, 2017-2018 cycle*

## Mentoring roles

The role of the mentor and the mentee/mentor relationship can be complex and may change during the life of a partnership, or even during a single meeting, depending on circumstances and the needs of the mentee. Typical mentor roles include:

### **Adviser and guide**

A mentor may often draw upon their own experience, both positive and negative, to provide insights to the mentee, to suggest possible courses of action and to highlight potential consequences. Based on their experience and knowledge, the mentor may suggest or recommend particular courses of action. The decision, however, will always be with the mentee, and they will have to weigh up the advice being provided before deciding on how to proceed.

### **Critical friend**

In the context of mentoring, the mentor is not really doing the mentee a favour if they only ever provide positive feedback. The mentor can absolutely be ‘on the mentee’s side’, but can still challenge the mentee and provide constructive, critical feedback.

### **Sounding board**

Sometimes all the mentee needs is a neutral, objective person to listen to their ideas and to gauge their reaction, or obtain some immediate feedback.

### **Teacher**

There are times during a mentoring partnership where the simple teaching of a particular approach or technique can be beneficial to the mentee, helping them to

tackle a problem with new and practical tools. This could be anything from a relaxation technique to statistical analysis.

### **Networker**

One of the great benefits of mentoring is that it has the potential to expand the mentee’s network, providing access to the mentor’s connections where this might be helpful to progressing the mentee’s developmental goals. Sometimes this can also work in the other direction, to the benefit of the mentor.

### **Role model**

Mentors are selected largely because they have the right experience and background to help the mentee to address their specific areas of developmental interest. They have already reached a level of achievement to which the mentee aspires. Even the most distinguished mentors, however, are often very modest about their suitability as a role model. Nevertheless, the career path, profile and achievements of the mentor provide an instructive model to the mentee.

### **Supporter or advocate**

The mentor is definitely ‘on the mentee’s side’. This may be expressed through the mentor speaking for the mentee and their interests in relevant contexts, possibly recommending them as conference contributors, for example. Sometimes this is literally ‘being there’ for the mentee to demonstrate support. For example, a mentee from one of our programmes mounted a show at the Edinburgh Fringe as a public engagement activity. The mentor turned up to see the show and this support was greatly appreciated.

# Benefits of mentoring

There are many potential benefits from a mentoring experience, both for the mentor and the mentee. These have been demonstrated time and again from mentoring partnerships within our other institutional programmes and are cited in participant feedback on a regular basis. Take this quote from a mentee on another mentoring programme as a typical example:

**“Above all, I would say that being mentored this year has really opened my eyes to the choices I have, big and small, about the directions my teaching or research or whole career could go in, and has really equipped me to make well-researched decisions about those choices – giving me a real sense that I am steering my own ship here, and not just buffeted by circumstance.”**

*Mentee, 2017-2018 cycle*

## Crystallising, clarifying and defining objectives

While we may talk about mentoring partnerships as being ‘progress-focused’ or ‘solutions-focused’, it is not always the case that the mentee will have clear ideas about their own ambitions, the areas they want to develop or what they want to get from the partnership.

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.

In effect, having to articulate what the mentee wants to achieve in their career and during the partnership to another person can be a very powerful process, helping the mentee to crystallise and clarify ideas.

## Setting SMART objectives

Once a clear sense emerges about the mentee’s priorities and what they want to achieve during the partnership, further work can be done to define some SMART objectives.

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.

**“I think I have gained a lot of confidence from having someone over an extended period of time really take my questions, interests, concerns and aspirations seriously, and invest time in them to probe and develop them with me. I feel like I have been given a really solid launchpad from which to pursue some of the goals we have really honed together.”**

*Mentee, 2017-2018 cycle*

## Tangible and intangible benefits

The benefits of mentoring may be very concrete things, like securing a new post, successfully bidding for grant funding or solving a specific problem. However, there are often more intangible benefits which are equally important and impactful. For example, developing confidence in certain activity areas is immensely important and can transform behaviours and results, and have a positive impact on mental health and job satisfaction.

The more intangible aspects of mentoring should be valued as highly as those which are easier to define and measure.

## Benefits to mentors

Mentoring is a developmental process – identifying, facilitating, supporting and celebrating progress. Within this process both mentee and mentor can benefit in terms of personal and professional development.

## The range of potential benefits of mentoring often cited includes:





# Stages of mentoring and mentoring meetings



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## The partnership lifecycle

### The introductory stage

At the start of any mentoring partnership, there is a process of rapport-building – the first steps towards building an effective mentoring relationship. This is often about getting to know and appreciate each other's backgrounds and interests, so that mentor and mentee bond on a social level. This may or may not develop into a lasting friendship. That would be a great extra benefit, but is not a necessary part of the process. As long as the partners can get along well enough to work collaboratively and address the mentee's development needs, the partnership will be productive and successful.

It is also important during the opening stages to discuss the 'business process' of the partnership. This should include any necessary explanations, clarify the purpose of the meetings, discussing anticipated benefits, the checking out of expectations, setting clear time boundaries and agreeing ground rules (see page 23 on Mentoring agreements).

Another essential part of the opening stages is to talk about and try to clarify the development goals of the mentee:

- What are the mentee's longer-term goals?
- In life and career, where does the mentee want to be in say, five or ten years?
- What are the issues that they feel need to be addressed to move from where they are now, to where they want to be?
- What aspects of this change can be productively addressed during the one year of the mentoring partnership?
- What are the priorities?
- Are there any overriding current issues that need to be addressed as well?

The conversation around these questions can be used to agree a structure and objectives for the partnership. This may change as the partnership progresses and as circumstances change, but it will provide a focus and a framework.

### **The main stage**

The main stage is where the mentoring partnership really gets on with business, and where progress is made. This should be a process of addressing agreed objectives of the partnership and working through them to achieve practical progress, while at the same time accommodating any more immediate and pressing issues that may arise.

For example, the partnership may be working on a long-term goal relating to improving working relationships, or on becoming more strategic. However, if between meetings an opportunity arises to apply for a new job, this may become a more urgent topic for discussion, with the longer-term goals temporarily set aside.

During the main stage of the partnership, partners should both review what is going well and discuss what the mentee is pleased and satisfied with so far.

Partners may then do the same for any areas which are not going to plan and are causing frustration, concern or lack of progress. These may be explored by looking at ways of improving the situation.

Partners should also periodically review the process:

- How the partnership works at a practical level, such as the frequency of meetings.
- How it works on a productivity level – is the partnership making progress, do the partners think the process is beneficial?

Again, any issues or areas for concern can be discussed and changes agreed.

### **Concluding stage**

Mentoring partnerships end for a number of reasons. Some end early because the mentee's objectives have been achieved or because the partnership has reached (by mutual agreement) the limits of what it can achieve. Some partnerships close simply because they reach the end of the duration defined by the mentoring scheme within which they operate.

Whatever the reason, it is important that the partners plan for the end of the partnership. This means that they should discuss and agree to end the partnership and that a final meeting should be scheduled. There are a number of issues to consider at this point:

- Review what has been achieved against the original objectives.
- What else may have been achieved?
- How the longer-term developmental goals of the mentee may have changed and what the next steps may be after the mentoring partnership.
- What the mentee and mentor both feel they have gained from the partnership.
- How well they feel the partnership worked (a review of 'process').
- How they will manage future contact.

## Mentoring meetings

### **Arranging meetings**

Consider where and when you want to meet. It is particularly important that you both feel comfortable in the chosen venue. You need to be somewhere where you will not be interrupted and that is conducive to positive discussion.

The frequency and duration of meetings is subject to agreement between partners, but it is recommended that for the first meeting 90 minutes is allocated, to ensure that there is time for the partners to begin the process of getting to know each other and to start building the foundations for a successful and productive relationship.

As we have said, the mentoring partnerships are mentee driven and are about taking responsibility. It is therefore the responsibility of the mentee to arrange the meetings and to maintain contact with their mentor to ensure that the meetings happen. We would not expect the mentor to have to chase up mentees about commitments they have made or to get meeting dates into calendars.

### **Face-to-face meetings**

These are always the most effective. During face-to-face contact we have much richer communication with the full range of verbal and non-verbal cues. This helps to ensure that messages are received, clarified and understood and that communication is therefore successful.

However, face-to-face is not always practical, and it is important that regular contact is maintained and that momentum and progress is not lost. It is sometimes necessary, therefore, for mentoring activity to include other forms of contact. If different options are available for 'remote' meetings to take place then the richer the form of communication the better.

### **Skype**

Skype (or a similar technology) can be effective, because it allows for verbal and non-verbal communication and allows the relationship to develop in a more natural way. Such 'meetings' may feel awkward at first but an adjustment is very quickly made.

### **Telephone**

This is a less effective way to conduct mentoring, because it eliminates all of the non-verbal communication that normally takes place. It is more difficult to manage a conversation when you cannot see the other person. Active listening becomes more difficult over the telephone, as you cannot see the other person's expressions and they cannot see your visual cues, like nodding or frowning. However, it is still possible to conduct mentoring over the telephone, as a lot of the content of any human communication is in *how* we speak, rather than the words we use. For example, our feelings and emotions are largely communicated through pace and volume of speech. Telephone mentoring can therefore work as an alternative to face-to-face meetings.

### **Written communication**

This may be a useful adjunct to other forms of communication, but is not an effective alternative. Written communication such as email can be used to provide information, confirm arrangements and so on, but slows down the two-way nature of effective communication and makes the reading of 'tone' very difficult. This means that email communication can easily be misinterpreted. A joke, for example, may be misconstrued and offence taken, simply because the tone of voice and visual expression are absent.

### **Planned and casual contact**

Effective mentoring requires planned contact – periodic meetings which ensure that there is dedicated time to spend on the partnership and on making progress towards achieving the mentee's developmental goals.

There is a place for casual meetings – they help to acknowledge the connection between mentor and mentee and help to build rapport. They may have practical uses, such as checking progress, confirming arrangements and so on. But they are not generally an appropriate way to undertake mentoring business and are not an alternative to planned meetings. A casual meeting may lead to a quick chat that can be helpful. A phone call asking for timely advice can work well. A discussion by email can be quick and productive. Be creative and responsive to need, but don't forget that the main medium through which mentoring relationships are built and through which they work, is clear space and dedicated time for a focused discussion, and this best takes place at a planned meeting.

### **Mentoring relationships and 'chemistry'**

It has been said that mentoring is not rocket science, but it could be chemistry. Every partnership is a unique combination of two unique individuals. No matter how hard we try to ensure that partners are compatible, based on the information we have, no-one knows what will happen until the partners meet. On a personal level they might hit it off, or they might not. Sometimes partners develop lasting associations or even friendships, but this is not a requirement – it is a bonus.

The important thing is that the partners are able to work together productively to progress the mentee's developmental objectives. Some partnerships are warm and friendly, others are quite businesslike. Either way, they can work, and once we have progressed through the matching process, and the proposed partner has been accepted by the mentee, it is our experience that the vast majority of partnerships do progress successfully.

If, however, for any reason either partner feels that the partnership will not work, then the sooner they discuss their concerns the better, and the sooner these concerns are shared with the scheme organisers the better too. Otherwise a valuable mentor is being tied up in an unproductive partnership, and there could be another ideal mentor available for the mentee.

The chemistry between partners should become clear at an early stage. The first meeting will be instrumental in ensuring that the partnership is effective in addressing the mentee's developmental goals.

### **The first meeting**

The first meeting is about rapport-building, exploration, clarification and agreement.

If the matching process has worked, then mentor and mentee will in almost all cases be sufficiently well-matched to enable them to form a productive partnership. The nature of this partnership, and the relationship between partners, will be different in every case. Every partnership is unique. Some are very formal and business-like, others much less so. Nevertheless, they can all be an effective way to help the mentee to address developmental goals.

Topics for discussion at the first meeting are suggested in the Mentoring agreement guidance included on page 23.

If the partners decide during or after the first meeting that the partnership will NOT effectively address the mentee's needs, then let us know. The sooner this is addressed the better. There is no stigma attached to this, and the sooner the scheme coordinators know, the sooner they can help to find a more suitable partner for the mentee, and the sooner the mentor can be freed up to be matched with someone else.

### **The meeting life-cycle**

There are no hard and fast rules about how a mentoring meeting should run. Mentoring partners organise and manage the meetings in a way that feels natural and comfortable to them. However, there is a typical process flow during a mentoring meeting that helps to maintain progress during the mentoring relationship. This involves five stages as follows:

**Reconnect:** re-establish rapport through informal conversation, the same way any acquaintances do when they meet.

**Review:** the meeting then turns to the business in hand – the mentoring partnership. The review process will revolve around progress with agreed actions taken forward by the mentee since the last meeting: an account of what has been achieved, and then discussion around the topic to explore what went well, what did not, what was learned and so on. This may lead into new areas of discussion and into areas which require further investigation, or follow-up actions.

**Renew:** having concluded the review part of the meeting, the partners can move on to any new business. This may naturally flow from the review, being the logical next steps towards achieving the developmental goals set at the start of the partnership, or could be completely new. Mentoring partnerships exist in a dynamic environment. Things change, new opportunities and problems present themselves and priorities may be re-evaluated. The partnership should respond to such changes and address the needs of the mentee as the partnership develops. This can mean

## Mentoring meetings *continued*

that the original objectives are set aside or abandoned in order to focus on the emerging issue. Sometimes, the new circumstances simply become incorporated into the mentoring agenda.

**Re-plan:** as the meeting draws to a close, it is important to review the meeting itself and draw out the actions which will enable the mentee to move forward, to make the next step towards achieving the developmental goals. One or more specific actions should be agreed, to be undertaken by the mentee before the next meeting.

**Action (leading into the next meeting):** between meetings the mentee should be working on the agreed actions. Reporting back on these will then form the 'review' part of the next meeting. It is important to note that with no action between meetings, there is no progress. If this situation persists, the partners may find themselves having the same conversations over and over again, without any sense of forward movement. If this occurs, the mentor may begin to question the value of the meetings and may wish to discuss this with the mentee.

## Receiving feedback

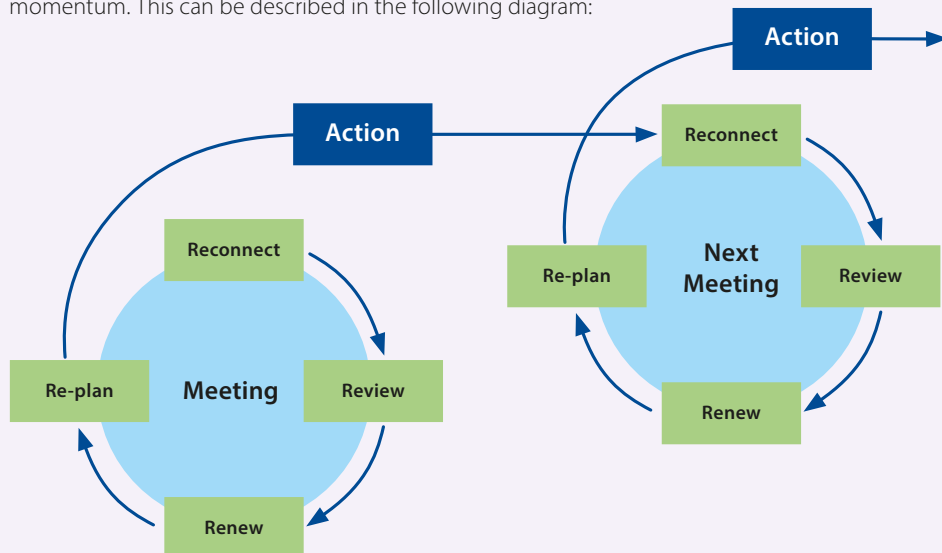
Talk to your partner about how to receive and use your feedback, regardless of your role.

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.

## The planning, action, review cycle

Five stages form a cycle of planning, action and review, which ensures that the partnership remains productive, with forward momentum. This can be described in the following diagram:



# Making mentoring work – approaches to effective mentoring



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## Mentoring agreements

Feedback from mentors and mentees strongly supports the idea of having a *mentoring agreement* in place between partners. We would therefore encourage all participants to use a mentoring agreement and to discuss this during the opening stages of the relationship – ideally at the first meeting.

The agreement does not need to be typed-up, signed and witnessed – it's not a legal document! However, you may choose to confirm the agreement in writing, to provide a mutual point of reference, and also to provide a benchmark against which progress and the success of the partnership can be measured. The most important thing is that the discussion takes place and that agreement is reached, even if no written record is kept.

The agreement can be used to clarify what each partner hopes to gain from the relationship, how much time and effort they are prepared to invest and the logistics of how the relationship will work.

As we have indicated earlier in this handbook, considering, discussing and formalising developmental goals for the partnership can itself be a helpful process. We have also stated that different people will have different types of goal and may wish to address different types of issues, some of which may be easily measurable, and others which may be less tangible. When designing the mentoring agreement, it is important to think about these goals and to express, as clearly as possible, the different types of goal that may be important.

Making time to formulate these objectives at the beginning of the relationship is an important part of successful mentoring.

A template of such a contract is provided below:

### **Mentoring agreement**

#### **Purpose:**

Expectations, roles, anticipated tasks.

#### **Meetings:**

Duration, frequency, venue.

#### **Ground Rules:**

Confidentiality, 'no go' areas, responsibilities, record-keeping.

#### **Criteria for Success:**

Monitoring progress, communication, feelings, achievement.

#### **Other Points:**

Leave/anticipated absences, reviewing 'process' as well as progress.

*"We put together a pretty detailed mentoring agreement at the start of the process, with some clear goals, and this has been very useful in identifying specific preparation tasks ahead of each mentoring session, to make the most of our sessions – and it has felt really productive finally doing things that I have had on my 'to do' list for an age... Sometimes you just need someone else setting you that deadline – but it is also the case that, under my mentor's guidance, those career-development tasks that I had begun setting for myself, took on new forms and directions, and were much more instructive as a result of that external input."*

*Mentee, 2017-2018 cycle*

## Further reading and resources

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*The Situational Mentor: an international review of competences and capabilities in mentoring.*  
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*Everyone Needs a Mentor.*  
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*Effective Coaching: Lessons from the Coach's Coach.*  
New York, Thomson Texere.

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*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.

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*Mentoring in Action: A practical guide for managers.*  
2nd ed. London, Kogan Page.

Thomas W and Smith, A (2004)  
*Coaching Solutions: Practical Ways to Improve Performance in Schools.*  
Network Educational Press.

University of Dundee (2016)  
*Mentoring: making a difference.*

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.

## Contacts and support

### Programme coordinator

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### Equality and diversity

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[www.st-andrews.ac.uk/hr/edi](http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/hr/edi)

### Occupational Health Services

[www.st-andrews.ac.uk/ehss/occupationalhealth](http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/ehss/occupationalhealth)

## Further information

For further guidance or any other queries contact:

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