

UEA Mentoring Programme Training September 2012



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Welcome

Thank you signing up to the UEA Mentoring Programme and thank you for taking part in this training.

It should help to reassure you that you already have many of the skills required to ensure an effective mentoring relationship. This session will help you prepare and should take no longer than forty five minutes to complete.

It will also help to clarify what's expected of you. A separate Mentors Support Pack is also provided and this will act as a source of reference after the training.

Mentor Training Programme: Objectives

- **Clarify the role** of Mentor and Mentee and the role of UEA
- **Define the boundaries** of the relationship
- **Highlight important skills** associated with mentoring
- **Discuss the Mentoring Lifecycle - Ensure things start off (and remain) on the right path**
- **Discuss how to tackle any potential problems**
- **Discuss how to conclude things positively**

The Mentor's Role is to...

1. Develop student's employability skills
2. Speak with their mentee about their aspirations and support their progression towards them

This will be achieved by:

- Listening carefully to what their Mentee wants to achieve.
- Challenging rationale, assumptions and preferences.
- Providing feedback and advice and, where appropriate, some direction.
- Sharing their experience and knowledge where appropriate.
- Building confidence by enthusing and encouraging.

Defining the boundaries of the relationship

For many students, the UEA Mentoring Programme will be their first experience of a professional relationship. Although students have academic advisers and lecturers, as well as line managers in their part time work, these relationships are often nurturing/paternalistic, taking account of the student's age and limited experience.

The Programme will introduce them to a new culture, that of the professional working environment. There will be unfamiliar terminology and unwritten 'rules' and expectations that we professionals can often take for granted after our own immersion. As a mentor, you need to be mindful of the fact that your mentee may be feeling overwhelmed at first, and inhibited by you – no matter how friendly and approachable you feel you are being. If they appear shy and lacking in confidence, don't panic. The rapport may just take a little time to build.

Another manifestation of this inexperience may be a lack of appreciation as to how busy you are and the particular demands you face. We will endeavour to instil awareness during mentee training but we hope you will also feel comfortable enough to make them aware of this yourself and to point out any behaviour which isn't professional.

The Mentor's Skillset

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Mentors should be able to:

- *Actively* listen and question *effectively*
- Create rapport, *establish* and *display* empathy
- *Encourage* personal reflection to increase *mentee self awareness*
- *Motivate* mentees to achieve their goals
- Provide *support* but also *challenge* perspectives and assumptions
- Inform and *empower*
- Acknowledge when things aren't going well

Key Skills in Greater Depth

- Active Listening
- Questioning and clarifying
- Providing Constructive Feedback and Encouraging Self Reflection

Key Skill: Active Listening

3 main types of listening:

X Passive - listening, but not clarifying or really interested in what is being said, appear attentive but our mind may be somewhere else!

X Competitive - when we are more interested in pursuing our own point of view

✓ **Active** - attentive, genuinely interested in what is being said, and what the 'message' means. We check understanding, clarify, and process the information. We may re-state or paraphrase what is being said and provide feedback on the information we have received - **HEARING > THOUGHT > RESPONSE**

Key Skill: Active Listening – Part 2

Physical approach

- ✓ Eye contact
- ✓ Engaged body language
- ✓ Relevant questions
- ✓ Pausing
- ✓ Configuring understanding & paraphrasing

Mental approach

- ✓ Keep an open mind
- ✓ Concentrate
- ✓ Don't interrupt
- ✓ Listen to tone as well as content
- ✓ Ask questions on any areas of difficulty or confusion

Key Skill: Active listening (continued)

- Clear your mind of distractions
- Be non-judgemental
- Note non-verbal behaviour
- Retain eye contact
- Challenge your mentee but don't be too confrontational: "Just talk me through how you went about reaching that conclusion."
- "How did that make you feel?"
- Paraphrase and reflect back what they've said in your words to ensure you've understood

Active listening: Exercise

In the appendices, is an exercise on Active Listening. Try out your skills and see if you picked up on all the points the student was indicating.

Questioning and clarifying

Asking questions

In addition to active listening a key mentoring skill is the ability to ask the right type of questions. This section illustrates the kinds of questions you will use during the mentoring process and includes a brief discussion of each type.

Types of questions

Open	To gather information
Probing	To explore and clarify
Summary	To obtain confirmation
Reflective	To explore and to problem solve
Comparison	To check alternatives
Hypothetical	To think more widely

OPEN QUESTIONS

Open questions allow speakers to open up and talk freely.

Useful means of obtaining information, in contrast to closed questions which tend to invite only “Yes”, ‘No’, or very short answers.

Open questions generally begin with ‘What?’, ‘Why?’, ‘When?’, ‘How?’, ‘Where?’, ‘Who?’

Examples of open questions which you might use include:

‘What progress have you made with . . . ?’

‘Why was that important to you?’

‘When did that breakthrough come for you?’

‘How have you been getting on with . . . ?’

‘Where did that belief come from?’

‘Who helped you to get over that hurdle?’

‘What would be the best way to take this forward?’

‘What do you hope to gain from your schooling?’

‘Which aspects of school do you like the most/the least?’

CLOSED QUESTIONS

Closed questions need to be treated with considerable care as their misuse can be dysfunctional. Closed questions have low diagnostic power and often yield yes/no answers.

Closed questions can be perfectly acceptable, for example 'Have you used this computer program/this book before?', or 'Are there difficulties with this approach?', but a question which might be thought to belittle a mentee, such as 'Have you read a book this year?', is not acceptable. Remember you will never develop a relationship by asking a series of closed questions.

Use closed questions sparingly and never more than one or two before using other types of questions to enrich the conversation.

Probing Questions

Open questions encourage full responses, some aspects of which may not be immediately understood or covered in sufficient depth. Probing questions can be useful in allowing you to:

- help mentees to remain focused on relevant and important issues
- help mentees to identify experiences, behaviours and feelings that give them a clearer perspective on the issue at hand
- gain a better understanding of the mentee and of their problems.

Examples of probing questions include:

‘You say you are finding difficult – what’s causing that difficulty?’

‘You say you can’t ...– what’s the history of this situation . . .? How did it begin?’

‘You say you feel like dropping– what could help you to persevere with it?’

‘You say you are thinking of not Imagine in six months’ time how you’ll feel about that situation.’

Summary/Reflective Questions

Summary questions help you to check your understanding of what the speaker is saying, or to clarify some information already given. Rather than reflecting the emotional content of what is being said, however, they are concerned with factual content. Examples of this type of question might include:

‘As I understand it . . .’

‘So what you are saying is . . .’

‘If I’ve got it right . . .’

‘So you are going to . . .’

REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS/STATEMENTS

This type of question can be used to get the mentee to reflect on an issue or to express an opinion on something.

‘What do you think should be done about . . . ?’

‘Do you think there are any other ways?’

‘How would you have gone about doing it?’

‘You seem unhappy about . . .’

‘How do you feel about . . . ?’

Effective Questioning Checklist

Types of questions to avoid - there are three kinds of questions that may be unhelpful as part of your mentoring repertoire:

- Multiple questions
- Leading questions
- Rhetorical questions

Checklist for Effective Questioning:

- Keep your objectives clearly in mind
- Establish a pattern of questioning which can be sustained, e.g.: Ask open questions, followed up with probing questions
- Limit the number of closed questions
- Use plain language
- Allow thinking time for responses
- Analyse and clarify replies
- Observe and interpret the pupil's non-verbal signals
- Maintain an atmosphere of friendly neutrality
- Don't talk too much

Providing constructive feedback and encouraging self reflection

- Encourage them to reflect first “How do you feel about the way you tackled...”
- Be specific
- Balance positive and negative
- “I like the way you...”
- “You might like to try...”
- End on a positive

Online only communication

Between 60 and 70 percent of all meaning is derived from nonverbal behaviour (face-to-face) and 20-30% from vocal communication (face-to-face/telephone). This leaves just 10-20% of meaning derived from the words themselves.

If you cannot meet in person, try to have an initial meeting via Skype. Consider telephone time. Remember to word your emails very carefully to ensure they aren't misinterpreted.

What mentors should avoid

- Deciding on goals, making decisions / steering in a particular direction
- Providing a lot of information before you've actively listened
- Failure to respond to emails/ phone calls
- Failure to contact UEA if things don't progress as you'd hoped
- Meeting out of hours (going for a drink)
- Meeting in a space that isn't a workplace or UEA or other high profile public space

Mentee Skills

Mentees should be able to:

- Respect the relationship and their mentor
- Keep an open mind
- Engage in self reflection
- Remain motivated and take advantage of opportunities
- Set achievable goals
- Ask questions and actively listen
- Maintain contact
- Organise themselves to achieve their goals
- Admit when things aren't going well

UEA's Role

- Provide advice on situations that arise in your relationship and act immediately where appropriate
- Provide facilities for your meetings on campus and make you aware of other services and facilities
- Check progress with monthly email to mentees and mentors
- Inform you about careers services and other UEA support that you can signpost your mentee towards
- Arrange interim feedback/ refresher session at the half way point
- Encourage you to form small support groups amongst the growing community of UEA Mentors

The Mentoring Relationship Cycle

Mentoring is a two way process

- Moves through a series of interrelated stages over time
- Like any other relationship is dynamic and changing
- Notional six stages to help you to plan the commencement and duration of your mentoring relationships more effectively

- 1. getting to know each other**
- 2. establishing rapport**
- 3. 'diagnosis'**
- 4. 'contracting' agreeing a programme of action and mutual expectations**
- 5. periodic review**
- 6. ending the mentoring relationship**

- Getting to know each other
- Establishing rapport

Getting to know each other

The basis for establishing a good working relationship. **Get to know your mentees as individuals**, actively encourage them to talk about themselves, you will also need to be prepared to disclose information about yourself.

Ideas?

- Discuss your backgrounds and your interests.
- What subject are they studying? Why did they choose it? What's the UEA experience been like for them?

Establishing rapport

Where possible, if meeting in person for example, make plenty of eye contact, ask questions, show empathy.

Crucial. Without this rapport you will not be able to gain their trust or develop their confidence in you as a reliable adviser and guide.

3 'Diagnosis'

- Identifying the problems, issues and areas of concern to your mentees that will provide the framework for future mentoring activities;
- Ensure these are correctly identified and understood as an inaccurate diagnosis almost inevitably results in inappropriate action.
- *Encourage them to reflect on their experiences so far*
- *Challenge their assumptions and perceptions*

4 'Contracting' - agreeing a programme of action and mutual expectations

Begin to help them to identify priorities and **review their goals**; discuss and clarify your respective roles and **mutual expectations**. The mentee needs to know what they are expected to do as regards implementing the action plan, and also to be aware of what you will do (and not do) as a mentor in helping them to achieve their goals.

- *Don't judge their goals but do challenge them. Get them to talk through the rationale.*
- *Ensure the goals come from them. They will only take full ownership if they have come from them.*
- *Understand what they're looking for from you.*

5 – Periodic review

- Initial programme of action will need to be revised as time goes on according to mentees' needs or development success
- Monitor the programme of topics discussed and that your mentee is achieving the desired results
- New strategies may need to be developed and the action plan revised

6 – Ending the mentoring relationship

- As the end of the mentoring cycle approaches you will need to spend some time planning your exit strategy (talk together about this)
- Ending the relationship in the right way is as important to the mentee as setting it up.
- Your task as a mentor is to help your mentee towards managing their career planning effectively and independently, without your presence and support.

Case Studies Exercises

Question

Case Study One

Hey Steve

Great chatting the other day. Decided publishing's for me but think it might be time to get some experience! Any chance of coming into your office to do some work?

Thanks!

Sophe x

Q. What is wrong with this mentee's approach?

Think about the content of the email as well as the tone and style of writing.

Q. What would you do in this situation?



Answer

Case Study One

Hey Steve

Great chatting the other day. Decided publishing's for me but think it might be time to get some experience! Any chance of coming into your office to do some work?

Thanks!

Sophe x

A. This is a boundary issue and an etiquette issue.

The mentees have been informed that work experience should not be an expectation of the Programme. This mentee has broken etiquette. The tone of the email and the style of address and farewell is inappropriate. This is a professional relationship.

Email the mentee back and ask them to reflect on their email. How might a potential employer judge this approach? You may assist them in finding work experience and help them to make the most of it, but you are an enabler, rather than a provider. Some mentors may wish to provide work shadowing/work experience opportunities as part of their relationship. If this is the case please let us know. However, the mentee should never expect this outright.

Try to encourage their self reflection, rather than chastising them. This is their first professional relationship and they may be struggling to understand the boundaries. Although we cover this during training, not all students may grasp this fully. If things aren't resolved, please contact us.

Question

Case Study Two

You haven't received any contact from your mentee for a few months. You've sent a few emails asking what's happening.

Q. What are you thinking?

Q. What will you do?

Answer

Case Study Two

Answer:

- At first it may seem downright rude and you may feel frustrated. Your time is precious and here is someone wilfully wasting it.
- In all likelihood, the student is suddenly panicking about the amount of academic work they have to complete. They should have responded to you but may feel guilty and ashamed about having not achieved the latest 'goal'. Check the academic calendar to see if there is anything obvious.
- There may be a personal reason as to why the student hasn't been in contact; perhaps a family bereavement or other difficulty.
- Try to reflect on your last meeting. Was there any underlying tension or potential for misunderstanding?
- Try and contact them once more and if you don't hear from them, inform us, so that we can investigate further.
- Sometimes mentoring relationships break down through no fault of either mentor or mentee. If we can't resolve the problem, we would at least like to offer your valuable time to another mentee and encourage you to put this behind you and remain with the Programme.

Question

Case Study Three

Review the student's goals below.
What are your initial thoughts?
Is there anything wrong with it?

Action Plan

Mentee Goals for the Scheme

1. Talk to someone in BBC about recruitment
2. Internship Easter 2012
3. Start graduate level job by Summer 2012

Goal	Action	Evidence of Completion
E.g. Prepare for Job Applications	1. Look over Mentees CV. 2. Look over a mock cover letter. 3. Conduct mock interview.	1. Have Mentee send edited/re-drafted CV and mock cover letter. 2. Discuss feedback from interview.

Answer

Case Study Three

These goals are ambitious but also potentially unrealistic for the Programme. A mentor's role is to help clarify career aims and act as a critical friend and sounding post. Your first meeting will need to challenge these goals and to question if they are achievable. The objectives are not SMART (specific, measurable, assignable, relevant , 'time bound' – though some are 'TIMED').

Action Plan

Mentee Goals for the Scheme

1. Talk to someone in BBC about recruitment
2. Internship Easter 2012
3. Start graduate level job by Summer 2012

Goal	Action	Evidence of Completion
E.g. Prepare for Job Applications	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Look over Mentees CV.2. Look over a mock cover letter.3. Conduct mock interview.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Have Mentee send edited/re-drafted CV and mock cover letter.2. Discuss feedback from interview.

Question

Case Study Four

Dear Stephen,

I know I said that I was interested in publishing but I went to a careers talk recently and it sounds really competitive. I'm thinking that it might be best if I look at some Graduate Schemes in business instead. I know that would please my parents! I feel a bit lost but I took on board what you said and I know I desperately need to get any kind of work experience. I've been working on my CV over the last couple of weeks and I was wondering if you could have a look over this and my cover letter. I'm thinking of sending out some letters to local businesses. I'll probably just send it to as many as I can find. What do you think? Do you have any advice?

Thanks, Sophie

What is wrong with this Mentor's response?
How will the mentee be feeling?

Hi Sophie,

Really busy at the moment. Let me know how it goes?

Stephen

Question

Case Study Four

Dear Stephen,

I know I said that I was interested in publishing but I went to a careers talk recently and it sounds really competitive. I'm thinking that it might be best if I look at some Graduate Schemes in business instead. I know that would please my parents! I feel a bit lost but I took on board what you said and I know I desperately need to get any kind of work experience. I've been working on my CV over the last couple of weeks and I was wondering if you could have a look over this and my cover letter. I'm thinking of sending out some letters to local businesses. I'll probably just send it to as many as I can find. What do you think? Do you have any advice?

Thanks, Sophie

Hi Sophie,

Really busy at the moment. Let me know how it goes?

Stephen

What is wrong with this Mentor's response?

How will the mentee be feeling?

The mentee sounds as if they are floundering. They have reached out to their Mentor but their Mentor has sidestepped their request and sent them a very 'curt' response.

If this student lacks confidence and insight, it may have taken considerable courage for them to draft that email. This response may knock their confidence and undermine the relationship considerably.

Is this Mentor's behaviour appropriate? What should they have done instead?

Perhaps they should send an initial response to state that they are busy but reassure the mentee that they will give their request their full attention when they have some time. Ideally, they would set a timescale for when that might be, so as not to leave the mentee 'hanging'. Remember to word your emails carefully. You are dealing with someone who is still learning the 'rules' of the professional working environment.

Active Listening

Case Study Five

Read the following. Imagine the student is sitting in front of you. Better still, ask someone to read this to you out loud to you. How many cues did you pick up on. How many areas would you like to probe further?

Hello I'm Gemma. I'm a final year literature student.

I took English lit because it was the subject I loved most at school. I came to UEA because of the reputation of the English Department but also because I really like that you get to pick your modules. Most English courses have loads more compulsory modules but at UEA there were just a few core modules and then lots of choice over what you study and lots of variety. I also really liked that we were allowed to study a module outside of our School. I took one in History and enjoyed it a lot more than some of my English modules

One thing I slightly regret about my choice of degree is that it hasn't really helped me decide what I want to do. I really enjoy writing and researching. In second year, I went to a talk about working in journalism and it really put me off. The girl said she practically had to stalk someone to get a story I could never do that to someone. It also seems really competitive and no one's offering work experience at the moment, or if they do it's so competitive there's no point in applying unless you've got connections or experience already.

I'd like to get a job in publishing or advertising but I don't know much about these areas.

I'm thinking of travelling or doing a masters, because it'll give me time to think for a bit.

I signed up for mentoring because I feel a bit lost about where I'm going. My parents are both accountants and they are always on at me about having 'a plan'. I think they would like me to become an accountant or do a law conversion. I've thought about this a lot recently and maybe they're right. They have job security and have provided a nice lifestyle for us. I'm not sure I want to give all of that up.

What I'm hoping to get out mentoring is some clearer idea of what I want to do. Maybe some ideas about how and where to get work experience. Any help about the world of work and where to start. I am the netball captain for UEA and I also work in Zara part time. Not much use in my job searching but there you go!

Active Listening

Case Study Five

How many cues did you pick up on. How many areas would you like to probe further?

There may be too many to tackle. Try to prioritise. Ask the mentee to take the lead in prioritising. Don't feel you need to 'solve all their problems'. They need to do the work. You will be challenging their assumptions and steering them in tackling what's most important now.

Hello I'm Gemma. I'm a **final year** literature student.

I took **English lit** because it was the subject **I loved** most at school. I came to **UEA** because of the **reputation of the English Department** but also because I really like that **you get to pick your modules**. [LIKES AUTONOMY?] Most English courses have loads more compulsory modules but **at UEA there were just a few core modules and then lots of choice** over what you study and **lots of variety**. [LIKES VARIETY? IS CREATIVE?] I also really liked that we were allowed to study a module outside of our School. I took one in History and **enjoyed it a lot more than some of my English** modules. [INTER DISCIPLINARY – LIKES A NEW CHALLENGE AND ISN'T PHASED BY CHANGE?]

One thing I **slightly regret** about my choice of degree is that it **hasn't really helped me decide what I want to do. I really enjoy writing and researching**. [CONTRADICTION?] In second year, **I went to a talk about working in journalism and it really put me off**. The girl said she practically had to stalk someone to get a story [VALUES?]. I could never do that to someone. [WHAT ABOUT OTHER TYPES OF JOURNALISM?] **It also seems really competitive** [FEAR?] and no one's offering work experience at the moment, or if they do it's so competitive **there's no point in applying** unless you've got connections or experience already. [LACK OF CONFIDENCE?]

I'd like to get a job in publishing or advertising [LACK OF SPECIFICITY] but I don't know much about these areas.

I'm thinking of travelling or doing a masters, because **it'll give me time to think** for a bit. [PROCRASTINATION? IS IT LEGITIMATE?]

I signed up for mentoring because **I feel a bit lost about where I'm going. My parents are both accountants** [FAMILY PRESSURE?] and they are always on at me about having 'a plan'. **I think they would like me to become an accountant or do a law conversion**. I've thought about this a lot recently and **maybe they're right**. They have job security and have **provided a nice lifestyle** for us. I'm not sure I want to give all of that up.

What I'm hoping to get out mentoring is **some clearer idea of what I want to do**. Maybe **some ideas about how and where to get work experience**. Any help about the world of work and where to start. [VAGUE]

I am the netball captain for UEA and I also work in Zara part time. Not much use in my job searching but there you go! [BUT WHAT ABOUT LEADERSHIP/ TEAM SKILLS AND CUSTOMER SERVICE EXPERIENCE/ COMMERCIAL EXPERIENCE]

What now?

- Well done on reaching the end of your Mentor Training.
- Accompanying this training is a Mentor Support Pack.
- If you still have questions, having read these resources, please let us know.

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