



Swansea University
Prifysgol Abertawe

Peer Mentoring Handbook

-Designed for *Mentors*-

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Swansea Academy of Inclusivity and Learner Success

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Introduction

Use this handbook to find out more about being a peer mentor. New students who come to the University are often nervous and worried about the transition from college and it is the role of the peer mentor to reassure new undergraduates and make them feel more welcome.

Colleges and Departments organise their own schemes but this guide will give you the key information on what becoming a peer mentor entails,

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What is Peer Mentoring?

Peer Mentoring schemes help new students settle into University life by matching a mentor with 3-5 new students, where you will meet on a regular basis

As you will learn later, Peer Mentoring reaps benefits not only for the mentee, but also the mentor.

The scheme is subjective to each department and therefore, contact yours to discover the specific methods and scheme used.

- More experienced students are trained to support new/less experienced students
- Ensuring a smooth transition to the University by enabling new undergraduates the opportunity to engage with current students in the same department
- Promoting the use of our most valuable learning resource - students!





Who can be a Mentor?

Peer mentors are volunteer undergraduate students in their 2nd or 3rd year who have undergone training to help equip them for their role. Mentors are normally matched with a small group of first year students from their own department and where possible, from the same course.

Your experiences and knowledge are of paramount importance to the effectiveness of this scheme and furthermore, it is vital that you are passionate and committed to helping your fellow peers.

- ✓ 2nd or 3rd year student
- ✓ Peer Mentoring is available in your department
- ✓ Understanding of the University ethos and events
- ✓ Engaging well with your academic studies

Key Qualities

- Friendly and approachable
- Patient
- Committed to helping others
- Good listening skills
- Responsible and reliable
- Able to show initiative
- Willing to learn and engage with others
- Relate well to students and staff



Roles and Responsibilities

As a mentor, you would be expected to fulfil certain responsibilities. Your commitment and enthusiasm is crucial to the efficiency of these roles.

As previously discussed, this scheme will be different in each department. Therefore, the roles and responsibilities you will bear may differ to other mentors.

Nevertheless, here are a few **generic duties** you will take on as a mentor.

- ✓ Complete the training course
- ✓ Mentoring X hours per week
- ✓ Be a friendly and welcoming face
- ✓ Attend meetings and maintain contact with your mentees
- ✓ Listen to the concerns of mentees and signpost relevant support
- ✓ Remain up to date with events
- ✓ Respond to emails from Programme Coordinators



Do's and Don'ts

Bear in mind these **key points** when fulfilling your role as a mentor

✓ **General guidance** on Academic matters

✓ Treat everyone with **respect**

✓ Keep the discussions and identity of the mentee **confidential**

✓ Maintain **boundaries** of a mentor/mentee relationship

✗ **Don't** be overbearing or insistent - you are a guide

✗ **Don't** Give/accept money/gifts from mentees

✗ **Don't** meet outside of the mentee group

✗ **Don't** be a: counsellor, financial advisor, social worker or academic tutor





Benefits and Rewards

Although the role as a peer mentor requires commitment and 100% effort, the rewards from the scheme are hugely significant and the skills obtained throughout are priceless.

- A sense of fulfilment and personal growth
- Being part of/creating a sense of community and belonging
- Enhanced employability skills such as: communication, teamwork, time management and interpersonal skills
- Improving your CV
- Meeting new people and creating a wider friend circle
- Satisfaction of making a fellow student more welcome and improving their welfare and happiness
- Enables students to obtain the SAILS Peer Mentoring HEAR Award

As a result of **YOUR** actions, mentees:

- Will feel less vulnerable and uncertain
- Obtain greater social and academic confidence
- Make more friends and settle in quickly
- Become aware of other student services and support



Top Tips and Advice

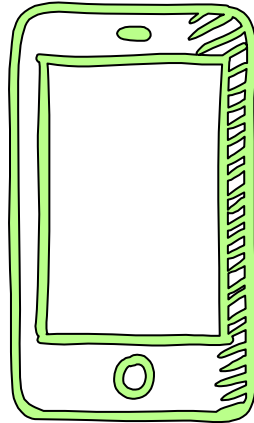
1. Do not give mentees your phone number until you have met them, and they are comfortable
2. Always meet in a public place
3. Use university email account when first making contact
4. Be polite and use appropriate language - you are representing your department
5. Conversations are confidential (except in special cases)
6. Look at your mentoring guidelines for a clear relationship boundary
7. Give general academic advice

Topics to talk to your mentees about

- Where to find things on campus.
- How to get involved with student societies.
- University procedures and where to find information.
- Departmental issues – the nature of coursework and information about particular courses or exams etc.
- How to deal with the shock of arrival!
- How to achieve a balance between life and study.
- How to manage on a limited budget.
- How to get around Swansea.
- What to do in Swansea.
- Who their student rep is.



Contacts



Any Questions?



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