



Swansea University
Prifysgol Abertawe

Peer Mentoring Handbook

-Designed for *staff*-

<https://sails.swan.ac.uk/>

Swansea Academy of Inclusivity and Learner Success

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Introduction

Use this handbook to introduce peer mentoring effectively into your college or department.

It includes key information and details about peer mentoring schemes, and how best to set one up depending on the needs of each individual department and its students.

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What is Peer Mentoring?

✓ Provides the means by which:

- Students can make friends
- Acclimatise to university life
- Accept their new student identity

✓ Mentors must be a **2nd/3rd** year student

Peer mentoring helps new students settle into university life by enabling small groups to meet up with a mentor on a flexible basis to address basic concerns about student life and learn from the experiences of an already established student

✓ **Complements:**

- Induction Activities
- Personal Tutoring
- Student Services

✓ **Benefits for the:**

- Mentees
- Mentors
- Department



Why Do We Need Peer Mentoring?

Changes to the
Education System



- **The massification of Higher Education (HE)** has led to a:
 1. Growth in “non-traditional” students with a wider range of entry qualifications
 2. Reversion to “Traditional Lectures” (large scale) and less focus on small group/tutorial teaching
- **Increase in tuition fees** has led to greater expectancy and increased pressure for Universities to provide a service that is seen to offer ‘value for money’



Types of Peer Mentoring Schemes

The type of peer mentoring is subjective to each department. However, we recommend an **Opt-out, Group Mentoring** based scheme for efficiency and effectiveness

Opt-out

OR

Opt-in

- New students have an allocated mentor and an initial meeting, and choose whether to continue the mentoring process

✗ Resource heavy - requires a large recruitment of mentors

- Students are informed of the mentoring scheme and choose whether to make contact

✗ Students in most need might not make contact

Group Mentoring
(1:5 ratio, mentors to mentees)

OR

One to one

- Mentees interact with each other and can discuss issues together

✗ Mentors will need support/training in group dynamics

- Enables more hesitant mentees to open up and convey issues

✗ Requires many more mentors and matching which may be challenging to achieve



Benefits and Rewards

MENTORS

- A sense of fulfilment and personal growth
- Being part of/creating a sense of community
- Enhanced employability skills such as: communication, teamwork, time management and interpersonal skills
- Improved 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

MENTEE

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

COLLEGE

- Stronger community amongst students
- Enhanced student engagement and performance
- Development of student/staff networks
- Higher student satisfaction levels
- Academic/personal/employability development for students
- Contributes to effective learning and teaching and widening participation



Roles and Responsibilities

Mentors

- ✓ Complete the training course
- ✓ Mentor 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 Scheme Co-ordinators

Lead Mentors (if applicable)

As for mentors, plus:

- ✓ Contact point for mentors and mentees with queries/concerns
- ✓ Running mentor team meetings
- ✓ Updating Scheme Co-ordinator on the progress of scheme
- ✓ Attending Lead Mentor meetings

Staff Co-ordinator

- ✓ Engage with colleagues and students to assess interest
- ✓ Identify costs and source of funding
- ✓ Manage recruitment and selection process
- ✓ Keep colleagues informed about the programme
- ✓ Maintain contact with Lead Mentors, mentors and mentees
- ✓ Contact point for those with concern

SAILS Team

- ✓ Provide advice and guidance to staff
- ✓ Provide opportunities for staff and students to meet
- ✓ Encourage sense of community e.g. celebration events
- ✓ Liaise with SEA and SALT where relevant
- ✓ Disseminate good practice



Guidelines and Advice

1. Mentors should not give mentees their **phone number** until they have met them, and mentees are comfortable receiving it
2. Mentors and mentees must always **meet in a public place**
3. Mentors should **use university email account** when first making contact with their mentees
4. Mentors should be **polite** and use appropriate language
5. Conversations between mentors and mentees are **confidential** (except in special cases)
6. Look at the **mentoring guidelines** (from the **SAILS website**) for information on relationship boundaries
7. Mentors must only give **general academic advice**

Topics for mentors to talk to mentees about:

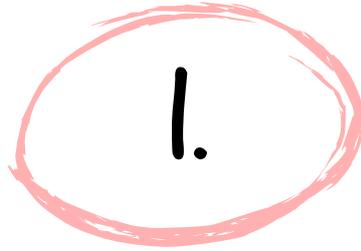
- Where to find things on campus.
- How to get involved with student societies.
- University procedures and where to find information.
- Departmental issues – the nature of coursework and information about particular courses or exams etc.
- How to deal with the shock of arrival!
- How to achieve a balance 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.



Best Practice

Checklist for a Successful Peer Mentoring Scheme

- ✓ Work in partnership with students
- ✓ Have committed staff and organisers
- ✓ Recruit and select mentors effectively
- ✓ Train the mentors
- ✓ Suitably match mentors and mentees
- ✓ Give on-going support to mentors
- ✓ Reward and recognise mentors
- ✓ Evaluate your scheme and act on feedback
- ✓ Market and advertise effectively
- ✓ Structured timeline in place



Staff-Student Partnership

Working with students is central to creating a student focused peer mentoring scheme:

- Partner with student societies
- Consult them in shaping the scheme
- Take advice on marketing and organised events
- Consult students on training
- Involve them in reviews
- Partner with student societies
- Work with Student/College reps

2.

Staff Commitment

A staff co-ordinator - whether academic or professional services - has to be in place to:

- Act as a contact point
- Provide continuity and stability
- Manage the scheme day to day
- Maintain ethical standards
- Deal with mentors' problems
- Oversee evaluation

3.

Recruitment and Selection of Mentors

Please liaise with the College/School HR Business Partner to agree a process for Right to Work checks and the monitoring / reporting of working hours required for some students including those on Tier 4 Visas.

Personal Qualities

- Responsible and reliable
- Able to show initiative
- Willing to learn
- Approachable
- Committed
- Listening skills

Academic Ability

- Do not need to be high achiever but must be coping with academic work
- Be able to provide informal general academic support (e.g. deadlines)

Information Event

- Explain the role, responsibilities and commitment
- Outline benefits and opportunities
- Talk from current mentors

Selection Process

- Completed application form with personal statement
- Interviews
- Offer other opportunities to unsuccessful candidates
- Observe students during training process

4.

Training

Go to page **22** for info on sample **training sessions** and **contracts**

Mentors need to be prepared and supported to give them confidence and practical information, which will enable them to provide effective support to mentees and avoid any pitfalls.

Suggested Topics for Training

Who will Deliver the Training?

- What is a mentor?
- Boundaries and confidentiality
- Self-awareness
- Diversity awareness
- Communication skills
- Meetings with mentees
- What to do if in difficulty
- Awareness of Uni services
- Awareness of study skills
- Group dynamics
- Discussion of mentor meetings

- Internal staff
- Involve current mentors to obtain an understanding of particular scenarios that could be encountered.

Mentee training not necessary but must manage the expectations of mentees in the relationship

5.

Matching Mentors with Mentees

It is essential that a mentee has a suitable mentor that they can interact with and learn from effectively:

Methods to match mentors with mentees

1. Mentees choose who their mentor is and can have multiple mentors (non-structured)
2. Mentee/mentor can state preferences on application (e.g. female, international)
3. Mentors will have a rota for drop-in sessions where mentees can be mentored without arranging beforehand

4. Matched using specified criteria...

- *Academic* - by discipline
- *Personal* - hobbies
- *Demographics* - gender, international BME

From information collected on application forms

6.

Ongoing Mentor Support

Training should enable mentors to be independent and to manage their mentoring relationships but they will also need on-going support with the scheme:

Types of Support

Staff Co-ordinator (and lead mentors)



Act as named contacts for mentor queries

Team Meetings



To discuss issues and queries

Online Support Network (e.g. Facebook)



Input from mentors and monitored by staff

Feedback Form



Agreed with mentee after each meeting

7.

Reward and Recognition



Financial Reward



- Not appropriate or sustainable according to Swansea University guidance
- Personal motivation is the key factor



Personal Satisfaction



- Developing personal and professional skills
- Recognised by award ceremonies/social media
- SAILS Peer Mentoring **HEAR** Award



Accreditation

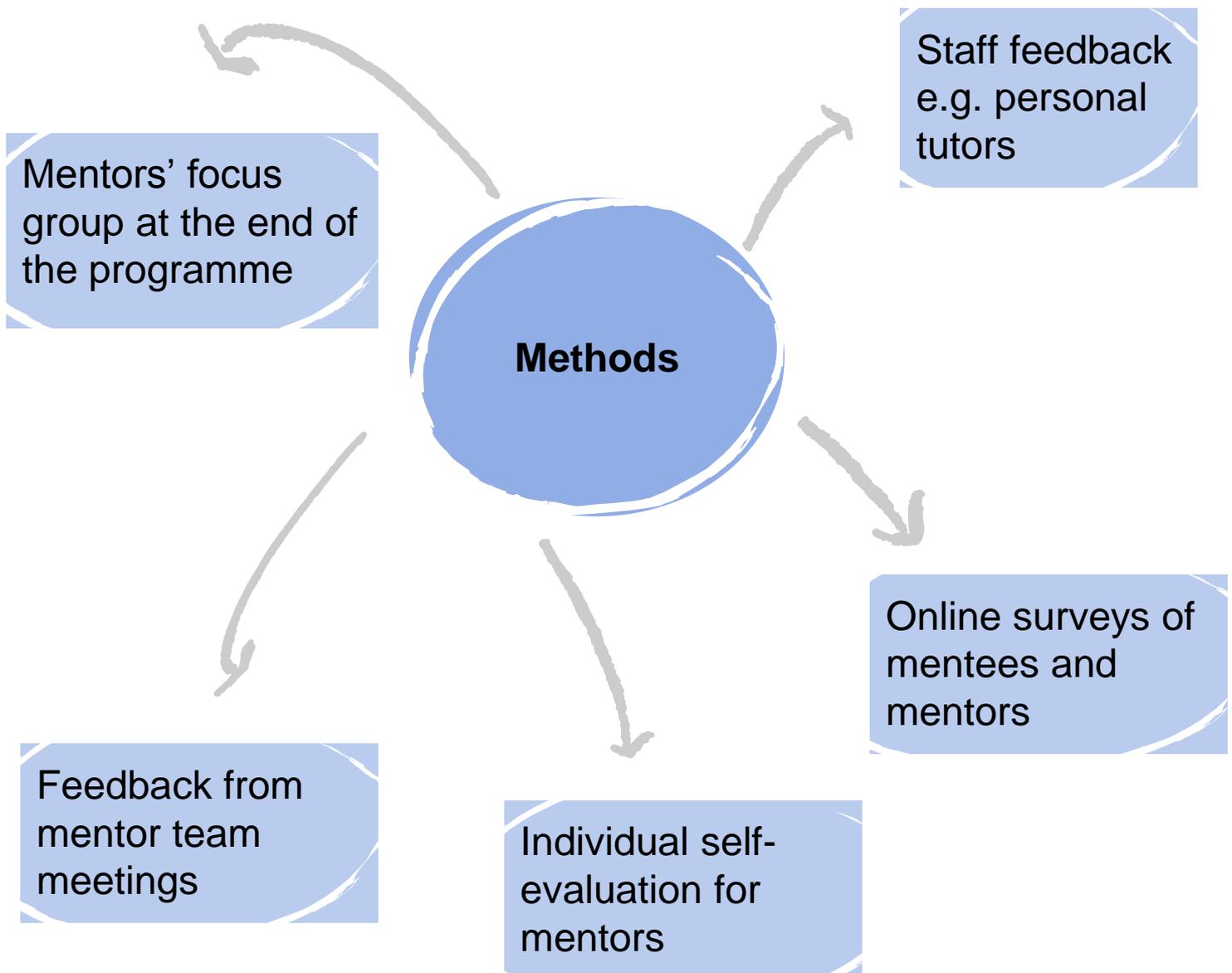


- E.g. Newcastle University included mentoring as role that can be undertaken as part of Graduate Development module
- Module proves a formal structure that sustains a scheme and recognises staff input

8.

Evaluation and Feedback

Evaluation is essential to the success and longevity of a scheme. It provides evidence of success, areas for improvement and a sense of joint ownership by acting on the views of the mentors



9.

Marketing and Advertising

- **Talk** about mentoring experience
- **Contact mentees** to encourage participation
- **Student placements** to help develop marketing plan and social media
- Promote scheme to ensure **commitment**
- Attend **induction events**
- Make ALL staff aware especially **personal tutors**
- Include scheme in **student recruitment activities**
- **Involve mentors** in promotion

Methods to achieve this

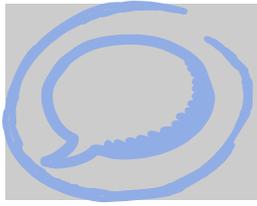
- Pre-arrival information
- Mentor emails during pre arrival
- Department/College sites
- Mentoring noticeboard
- General noticeboard
- Welcome Week - "Meet your Mentors"
- Emails in week 1-4
- Information provided by Personal Tutors

10.

Timeline

Follow this timeline as a guide for what to do and when, for setting up a new/planning the continuation of an existing scheme.

| Month | Activities |
|----------|---|
| Oct/Nov | <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Get a sense of level of interest from staff and potential mentors (email, surveys and staff meetings)● Start publicity for next year's scheme (personal tutor meetings, employability publicity events in October)● Info for next year's scheme available on: Open Days, departmental website |
| Dec | <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Evaluation and feedback of current year scheme (if appropriate) |
| Feb | <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Information session for potential mentors |
| March | <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Recruit mentors - by personal statements, interviews |
| Apr/May | <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Training sessions for mentors● Final interviews to guarantee mentor suitability● Set up Facebook page for new mentors |
| May/June | <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Planning Welcome Week events with mentors and final briefing session● Evaluation and feedback of current year scheme (if appropriate) |
| Aug | <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Prepare information on mentoring scheme in Welcome Pack for new students beginning in September |
| Sept | <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Match up mentors/mentees, notify staff about scheme● "Meet Your Mentor" event in Welcome Week● Formal start to Mentoring |



Key Questions

Consider these questions before you start peer mentoring in your department/college:

Purpose and **aims** of your scheme?

Timings - what needs to happen when?

Who will be **eligible** to be a mentor/mentee?

How will you **advertise** the scheme?



Form of mentoring? (e.g group mentoring)

Resources for training?

How will mentors be **trained**?

Will you **match** mentors and mentees?

How will you cater for **diversity**?



Monitoring and **evaluating** the scheme?



Sample Documents

The templates provided on the **SAILS website** pull together elements of practice from other institutions and can be adapted to suit local schemes.

- **Sample mentor application form** for students who wish to apply to become a mentor
- **Signed agreement by mentors** can help to establish commitment to the mentoring role. The agreement can be used as part of training, so that mentors understand and feel ownership of the contents
- **Signed agreement by mentees** can help them understand the expectations and limits of the mentoring relationship
- **Sample mentor training session** will help departments and staff understand how a standard session is structured and taught
- **Sample evaluation questionnaires for mentors and mentees** to obtain feedback and advice on the scheme

To view, download and print these templates, go to:

sails.swan.ac.uk/sample-forms-and-agreements/



university Policies

Consider these university policies - especially if you will be working with mentees who are under 18

DBS Checks

<http://www.swansea.ac.uk/humanandhealthsciences/undergraduate/dbs/>

Safeguarding under - 18s

Go to <http://www.swansea.ac.uk> and search “Download Under 18's Policy & Procedure”

Equality and Diversity

<http://www.swansea.ac.uk/personnel/equal-opportunities/>

Dignity at Work

<http://www.swansea.ac.uk/personnel/policies-and-procedures/equal-opportunities/dignity-at-work-and-study-policy/>

Unfair Practice

<http://www.swansea.ac.uk/academic-services/academic-guide/assessment-and-progress/extenuating-circumstances-policy/8-unfair-practice/>



Find Out More

Nottingham University mentoring agreement

<http://workspace.nottingham.ac.uk/download/attachments/219350615/Peer%20Mentoring%20agreement%202013.docx?>

Stirling University: STEER peer mentoring resources

<http://www.steer.stir.ac.uk/MentoringResourcesandSupport.php>

Scottish Further Education Unit: Sample peer mentoring handbook

<http://www.mentorsme.co.uk/images/uploads2/SFEU-sample-peermentoring-handbook.pdf>

Essex University peer mentor guide

<http://www.essex.ac.uk/students/study-resources/mentoring/documents/peer-mentor-guide-colchester.pdf>

City of Bath College peer mentoring booklet

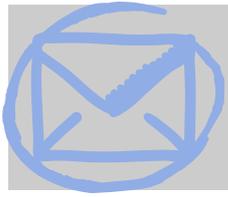
http://moodle.citybathcoll.ac.uk/moodle/pluginfile.php/912/mod_resource/content/1/PeerMentoringBooklet.pdf

Leeds University: peer mentor guide

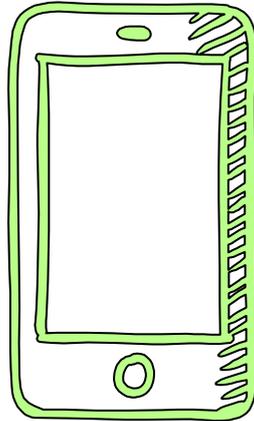
https://www.leeds.ac.uk/ssn/peermentoring/docs/mentors_guide.pdf

Peer mentoring report

https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/sites/default/files/aston_what_works_final_report_1.pdf



Contacts



Any Questions?



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