

## PGR Peer Mentor guidance

At the start of term, within the first four weeks, you should contact your mentee/s and suggest a meeting. Here are some tips on how to approach meeting your mentee/s either 1:1 or as a group. Meetings may take place in person on campus, or may take the form of a video discussion depending on mentor/mentee flexibility.

### Expectations

Inform your group of how much you can do for them, how many meetings you could make, how to contact you, and general ground rules (e.g. no phones please, everyone contribute, be polite and considerate). Remember – you can't guarantee confidentiality, only discretion.

### How to listen well

- Watch for non-verbal clues. Listen with your eyes as well as your ears. Watch for non-verbal clues, such as the person's body language.
- Learn to use your thinking time wisely. Try to identify the theme of the other person's message, and check your grasp of the facts by asking them questions.
- Become an observer. Avoid becoming 'one who speaks and listens to himself speak'.
- Listen with an open mind. We all have a tendency to resist ideas that are of no personal interest to us. Open your mind and focus on what the person is saying, even if you think you're not interested – you might learn something new!
- Further advice on listening is available [here](#)

### Questioning

Through the use of questions the mentor guides the mentee to:

- find their own solutions
- develop their own skills
- create new ways of thinking
- change their own assumptions and perceptions
- gain greater self-awareness
- improve their personal performance.

### Why is it important for the mentee to use reflective practice?

As mentor, you must help this process along by using reflective questions, for example 'How did you feel at the time?' or 'Why do you think that happened?' or 'What made you approach the situation in that particular way?'

It helps them:

- to accept responsibility for their own personal and professional growth
- to see a clear link between the effort they put in and the outcome
- to get value from each mentoring experience
- to 'learn how to learn' and add new skills over time.

## Why is it important for the mentor to use reflective practice?

As a mentor, you need to be keenly aware of how learning happens for you yourself, particularly if you want to help others. As you explore your role as mentor, you will need to observe change as it takes place for you.

Reflective practice:

- develops your analytical skills and creative thinking
- highlights areas where you need more knowledge
- leads to greater understanding and ability
- increases the chance of the mentee receiving effective mentoring from you
- helps your self-awareness and your personal and professional development.

## What are the boundaries of the mentoring role?

The way you behave as a mentor is shaped by the ethical, legal aspects and requirements of the role. Together with an awareness of the skills, 'know-how' and tools you need to be an effective mentor, these provide a clear guide to the boundaries of a mentor's role. Always bear in mind that mutual trust and respect between you and the mentee should be key.

Be aware of boundaries of expertise e.g. you are not a counsellor and if you feel the mentee needs a counsellor you can advise them to seek support through the student support services.

What will you cover at the first meeting?

The following is an example of a checklist covering points you might find useful to discuss at your first meeting with the mentee.

- What do we expect to learn from each other?
- What is the ideal schedule for our contact and meetings? How often will we meet?
- How long shall we meet for?

## The GROW model

This is a useful technique for structuring mentoring sessions. The GROW model, developed by John Whitmore, allows you to 'navigate' your way through a session, first by setting the mentee's Goal and identifying where they are now – their current Reality – then exploring their Options and ensuring they have the Will, or motivation, to grab hold of the challenge and run with it.

Example questions of each stage can be found here:

[businessballs.com/coaching-and-mentoring/grow-model/](https://businessballs.com/coaching-and-mentoring/grow-model/)