Alumni to Alumni Mentoring Scheme

What is mentoring?
Whether you’re starting out in your professional life, considering a career change, wanting to move up in your chosen profession, or are curious about other industries where your skills and expertise may be transferable, mentoring can be an invaluable opportunity. You, as a Nottingham graduate, can benefit from the experience of other University of Nottingham alumni, helping you to become the person you want to be.

For this programme we suggest mentoring is conducted online, allowing both mentor and mentee flexibility in terms of time and schedule.

What is a mentor?
A mentor is an experienced guide who can provide support and help the mentee to find the right direction and develop solutions to career issues. Mentors are good listeners, who want to help their mentees realise their potential and capitalise on their strengths.

‘The delicate balance of mentoring someone is not creating them in your own image, but giving them the opportunity to create themselves’ Steven Spielberg

Is mentoring right for me?
If you are looking for someone supportive to talk to about a specific professional goal or set of goals, and are looking for someone to facilitate you moving forward with these, then mentoring may be for you.

It is important to recognise, however, that you must take responsibility for driving the mentoring relationship, that you can dedicate the required time to the interaction, and that you respect the schedule and other commitments of your mentor.

Timeline
- The mentoring scheme for 2017 graduates will follow a more formal timeline and set dates.
- The mentor will contact the mentee once they have agreed to take part in the partnership. This email will be copied into the Alumni Relations team so we know you are in contact.
- The Alumni Relations team will factor in the two check-ins, each after around one month, to ensure the relationship is progressing well.

For any queries about the scheme please contact Alumni Relations: alumni-enquiries@nottingham.ac.uk

Making contact
After a match has been made and your mentor has contacted you please ensure you reply within one week. This may be anything from a short greeting to a summary of what you would like to get out of the relationship.
Mentee & Mentor Responsibilities

As a mentee, you should bear these responsibilities in mind:

- It is up to you to set the agenda, with assistance or approval from your mentor, as it is your needs that are to be addressed
- Maintain contact with your mentor. If you know you are going to be busy or away, let them know in advance
- Respect the other commitments your mentor has, and show appreciation for the efforts they make. You should always consider any opinions or suggestions they may offer
- Whether or not the relationship is successful, you should remain courteous and keep any information confidential at all times
- Inform your mentor of the progress of any actions which have resulted from discussions you may have
- Provide feedback to the scheme when requested

Mentors should bear these responsibilities in mind:

- One of the most important tasks will be to help your mentee to set realistic goals
- Enthusiastic participation in and commitment to the scheme
- Be open about your own expectations and goals for the relationship
- Maintain regular contact

Both mentee and mentor have the following responsibilities:

- You must keep any information exchanged confidential. Neither should discuss the details of the mentoring relationship with any third party without the express permission of the other
- If you have any difficulties with the pairing, you must make this known to the scheme coordinator so that the issues can either be resolved or the relationship ended appropriately
- You must both agree to provide feedback enabling us to develop and improve the mentoring scheme via the evaluation process
- Alumni Relations cannot take responsibility in the event that mentee and mentor decide to meet during the course of their pairing. If you do decide to meet we suggest meeting in a public place and ensuring others know who and where you are meeting.

Please be aware that you are both responsible for keeping the information you exchange confidential during the mentoring scheme and after the partnership has finished.

Expectations

As a pair, it is important that you get to know each other in order to build a bond of mutual trust and respect. It is not advised that your emails become very personal, but finding common ground is recommended.

The aim of the scheme is to support your career planning, help you to develop networking opportunities and to develop your employability skills. However, it is important to understand that this scheme is not to be used to enhance your employment prospects with your mentor’s organisation.

Reliable and regular contact is more important than frequency, which can vary at different stages of the mentoring relationship. If, for any reason, you have any technical difficulties (or your mentor experiences difficulties contacting you) we will ensure both the mentee and the mentor are notified.
Boundaries and Ground Rules
The mentoring scheme is a careers-focused activity aimed at developing and improving your employability skills. As a graduate of the University of Nottingham you are expected to behave in a professional manner at all times and only ask for careers-related advice.

Together with your mentor, you will establish your own ground rules. This will include how often you communicate, how you communicate, and whether your mentor would prefer you to concentrate all your questions in one email at a time, or in multiple emails depending on your progress.

Evaluation & Monitoring
There are two check-ins scheduled throughout the mentoring programme. These are designed to assess how the partnerships are progressing, to provide assistance where necessary, and to evaluate the scheme as a whole. As the mentoring process is gradual, you can also use these check-ins as an opportunity to look back on what has been achieved so far and to re-evaluate your expectations where necessary.

Both check-ins will be conducted via an online survey, sent to both mentee and mentor. Please do be honest in your feedback, as this will help us to help you, and others on the programme, to get the most out of your mentoring relationship.

Closure
When it is time for the mentoring process to close (the closure date will be sent to you), you need to think about how to thank your mentor. Be sure to mention what has been achieved throughout the process, and how they have helped.

If you wish to continue with your pairing at the end of the scheme, this should be done outside the scheme and independently agreed upon.

Support & Contact Information
The Alumni Relations team cannot accept responsibility for the conduct of individual mentees and mentors, but we will provide support in terms of guidelines, feedback mechanisms, monitoring and advice.

To get in touch with the scheme coordinator, please email: alumni-enquiries@nottingham.ac.uk