Alumni to Alumni Mentoring Scheme

What is Alumni-to-Alumni Mentoring?
Mentoring is a fantastic way to share your industry expertise and professional experiences, to inspire a fellow alumni, and help them to become the person they want to be. As a mentor, you can connect with a University of Nottingham graduate and help them to consider their professional future in more depth by acting as a guide. Whether your mentee is starting out in their professional life, considering a career change, looking to move up in their chosen field, or is curious about other industries, your support and advice is invaluable and will really give your mentee the extra confidence they need when it comes to making important career decisions.

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 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 would like to play an important role in a graduate’s professional life, are looking to refine your one-to-one mentoring skills, can provide advice about the unwritten aspects of your role or industry, or are interested in widening your professional network, then mentoring may be for you.

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

Timeline
• Once you have agreed you’d like to help the mentee we will provide you with their email address for you to make first contact. This ensures both you and the mentee are happy to communicate via email. Please ensure you copy in the Alumni Relations team to ensure we know you are connected - givingtime@nottingham.ac.uk. We can then factor in check in’s to ensure the relationship is progressing well.
• The mentee is encouraged to contact you as soon as they can after your first email.

Making contact
After a match has been made we will send you the details of your mentee, and you should aim to contact them within one week. This may be anything from a short greeting to a summary of what they would like to get out of the relationship.
Mentee & Mentor Responsibilities
As a mentor, you should bear these responsibilities in mind:

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

Mentee responsibilities include:

- Setting the agenda, with assistance or approval from you
- Maintaining contact with you. If your mentee is going to be busy or away, they should let you know in advance
- Respecting the other commitments you may have and showing appreciation for the efforts you make. Mentees should always consider any opinions or suggestions you may offer
- Whether or not the relationship is successful, mentees should remain courteous and keep any information confidential at all times
- Informing you of the progress of any actions which have resulted from discussions you may have
- Providing feedback to the scheme when requested

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

Please do be aware that you are both responsible for keeping information exchanged 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 for mentors to support the career planning of alumni mentees, help you to develop networking opportunities, and to develop your mentoring skills. However, it is important to understand that this scheme is not to be used by mentors to promote their organisation or offer employment to mentees

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 difficulty sending or receiving emails you must let the scheme coordinator know as soon as possible so this can be followed up with your mentee. If your mentee is experiencing technical difficulties you will be notified.
Boundaries and Ground Rules
The mentoring programme is a careers-focused activity aimed at developing and improving employability skills. As a graduate of the University of Nottingham you are expected to behave in a professional manner at all times and only provide careers-related advice.

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

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
If you wish to continue with your pairing at the end of the scheme (the closure date will be sent to you), 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

Thank you
We are very grateful to you for offering your time to help support a fellow University of Nottingham alumni and guide them in the right direction as they consider their future career path. We hope you enjoy the Alumni-to-Alumni Mentoring scheme and find it a rewarding experience!