

GCU Career Mentoring

Guide for Mentors

Thank you most sincerely for agreeing to mentor a final year GCU student.

The mentor role

Mentoring is a one to one confidential partnership where an experienced GCU graduate (mentor) is matched with a GCU final year student or new graduate (mentee). The aim is to give mentees an opportunity to gain an insight into their preferred employment sector, develop employability skills and personal networks through the help of a mentor. When matching mentees with mentors, we look at areas of study, professional experience and broader mentee needs such as CV writing, confidence-building and interview skills to make the best possible match. Whilst we endeavour to do so, please be aware we may not always be able to provide an exact match based on your subject of study or profession.

Some mentees have a clear idea of the career path they intend to follow and would value a mentor who can provide a real-life insight into that sector. Others may be less sure of career options and would appreciate the help of a mentor to provide an insight into their role or sector. All mentees have been given realistic expectations of the mentoring agreement and understand this is to provide guidance and advice, not provide an employment or internship opportunity, not are there any guarantees post mentoring programme.

As a mentor, you are expected to:

- Be patient and build trust between you and your mentee
- Be open to sharing your own experiences, expertise and offer alternative perspectives
- Help your mentee to think through and consider their career goals
- Encourage your mentee to build confidence in themselves, their choices and their abilities
- Encourage your mentee to be proactive and set goals
- Help your mentee to reflect and find their own solutions to problems
- Facilitate networking opportunities through your professional contacts where appropriate

Timeline

Your mentee will make the initial contact with you to introduce themselves.

The mentoring process will last for a period of **6 months**, starting in March 2025 and ending in August 2025. You should decide on the amount and level of support you can realistically provide within this time frame and agree this with your mentee at the start. We recommend a minimum of one virtual meeting per month, however this is just a guide and a mutually suitable structure can be agreed entirely between yourself and your mentee to suit both your needs.

All mentees will have completed a short training session which explains the mentoring process and expectations of them as mentees.

Confidentiality

As part of the mentoring relationship, you are likely to discuss personal details in relation to your work and career with your mentee. Similarly, your mentee will talk to you about their experiences. It is important that your conversations remain confidential. You should discuss confidentiality at the outset of the mentoring relationship and revisit this agreement when necessary.

Suggested meeting schedule and content

- Meeting 1:** Introductions and getting to know each other
- Meeting 2:** Goals and objectives
- Meeting 3:** Skills, strengths and weaknesses
- Meeting 4:** Review mentee's progress
- Meeting 5:** Review mentee's progress
- Meeting 6:** Evaluation and next steps

The outline below has been shared with your mentee as a possible structure for the 6 months you have with them. You do not need to follow these ideas; these are just suggestions to help you if you need it.

The first mentoring meeting is important for building rapport and the result of this conversation will be an agreement that sets out the expectations and responsibilities of both mentee and mentor.

Take the time to get to know each other. Here are some ideas to cover:

- Start by discussing what you might have in common.
- Define time commitments and general rules of behaviour. Use the Mentoring Agreement for this.
- Confidentiality - what do you both need to do to protect the confidentiality of the mentoring relationship?
- Goals - what does the mentee want to have achieved by the end of the mentoring process?

- Success criteria and measurement - how will you both know if you have succeeded?
- Accountability - how do you ensure that you both do what you say you are going to do?
- Mentoring agreement - agreed by both parties. What do you need to include to ensure that this agreement works?

Meeting 2 – Goals and objectives

Once you and your mentee have created a mentoring agreement outlining what the mentee wishes to accomplish and when, it's then time to plan how the mentee will go about achieving their set goals.

Example Question: What are your goals or areas for development?

Discuss your mentee's 6 month goals (unless you covered this in meeting 1)

Other discussion ideas (optional):

- Identify their top 3 goals
- In 6 months' time what does the mentee want to be saying/ doing differently?
- How will they know/ measure how they have achieved their goals?
- Discuss their strengths and how would they like you to help them achieve their goals?
- What are their development areas that need to be addressed?
- What is getting in the way? (fears, obstacles, people)
- Brainstorm ideas on what you both can do about the obstacles?

Meeting 3 – Skills, strengths and weaknesses

The mentor should assist the mentee with identifying skills required and ways to determine their own strengths and weaknesses.

Examples of questions to ask the mentee:

- What are you good at?
- What have others complimented you about?
- What have others had to help you with on more than one occasion?
- Which projects and tasks seem to drain your energy?
- Which projects have you spent hours on without getting tired?
- What are your interests outside of university, and why do you like doing them? What don't you like? Did it come easy to you, or did you find it difficult?
- When you encountered difficulty learning or performing a task, what motivated you to continue?
- What did you achieve in this meeting and what are your actions?

Meetings 4 & 5 – No set agenda

These meetings provide the opportunity to check progress with your mentee. This is beyond the halfway point of the mentoring process.

Examples of questions to ask the mentee:

- What have you accomplished so far?
- How long have you been working on this?
- Where do you need to refocus?
- What is your next step?
- What do you have to do to make it happen?
- What problems or obstacles might occur that would prevent you from achieving the best result?
- What will you do if the first plan does not work as well as you expect?
- What resources do you have; what do you need?
- How can I help you succeed?

Other ideas to prompt conversation:

- Discuss what the mentee has learned since last time?
- Assess progress on their 6-month goals?
- Has the mentee considered areas that they still find challenging?
- What support can you provide to help your mentee with this?
- What does the mentee need to commit to between now and the next and final session?

Meeting 6 – Evaluation and Next Steps:

It is expected that mentors help mentees to close the relationship in a constructive and professional manner

Examples of questions to ask the mentee:

- What has the mentee achieved? How do they plan to celebrate these achievements?
- What are they proud of/ pleased about?
- Are there still areas to work on?
- What are their new 6-month goals moving forward from the mentoring experience?
- What are you and your mentee's next steps (continue working together? work with a new mentee)
- Reflection and acknowledgements – think about how your mentee has helped you?

Contact us

Should you or your mentee have any questions related to the mentoring programme or other aspects of the University, please contact our team any time on careermentoring@gcu.ac.uk