

EMPLOYABILITY MENTORING

One to one handbook

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**CAREERS AND
EMPLOYABILITY**

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Welcome to one to one mentoring!

Congratulations on being linked to one another as part of your experience with Employability Mentoring! We hope that time spent on this project will be enjoyable and that you will look back on it as a hugely beneficial experience which will help you both in your future career paths.

Some useful definitions

Employability Mentoring is an initiative within DMU's Careers and Employability offer to students alongside a range of services designed to increase employability post-graduation. You'll find a few definitions below to help you better understand the purpose of mentoring and in this context, 'Employability Mentoring'.

Mentoring is:

'A voluntary, mutually beneficial and purposeful relationship in which an individual gives time to support another to enable them to make changes in their life'.

Mentoring and Befriending Foundation, April 2012

Employability Mentoring at DMU is:

Either a one-to-one or small group based voluntary relationship where there is a two-way exchange of information. This relationship may be either face to face or online and includes both the mentor and the mentee/s sharing their perspective and life experience based on topics associated with the mentee's 'employability'.

What is the purpose of Employability Mentoring?

The purpose is that the mentor, who holds a level of experience in employment, can share their perspective with the mentee/s in order to help them learn from those experiences and inform effective decision making around their future career choices.

What is a mentor?

A mentor is a person who meets with a less experienced person (mentee) to help them learn from the experiences that they share, based on a growing relationship and focusing on an area of development, in this case 'employability'. Central to the relationship is development and the setting of goals for growth and achievement. Critically the mentor shares stories, anecdotes, and actual experiences from their own work and life relating to employability.

What is a mentee?

A mentee is a student/graduate who meets with a more experienced person to learn from their experiences, shared in a growing relationship and focusing on areas of development around 'employability'.

The project aim and objectives

As a brief reminder we wanted to emphasise the important of our project aim and objectives...

What is the aim of Employability Mentoring?

- To improve the employability of DMU students using industry mentors

The objectives of the Employability Mentoring Project are:

1. To diagnose and clarify a student's current position in relation to their own perceived employability
2. To identify a future desired state as to the sort of professional they aim to become
3. To explore future pathways using the experience and perspectives of employability mentors
4. To undertake actions based on new learning to think, speak and act differently in order to become the professional they seek to be

How will you benefit?

There are many benefits of being in a mentoring relationship no matter whether you are a mentor or a mentee. By engaging in mentoring it can further increase your employability prospects by:

- Helping you to improve your confidence in your own ability to learn
- Helping you to improve how you network professionally with others
- Engaging you in meaningful one to one dialogue discussion around professional development
- Improving your openness to new ideas, new perspectives and new thinking
- Developing your ability to ask questions, answer questions and set meaningful actions as a result
- Building empathy with another person around topics that matter to you and to them
- Sharing experiences based on life so far and using these to further inform and enrich your perspective
- Developing an insight into another persons mind on how they see industry and its challenges

The list of potential benefits is huge and ongoing. The start of your journey with your mentor or mentee will involved identifying what it is that you both aim to get out of the experience. Here you might set things to explore, work towards and address. We are on hand **every step of the way** to call on and support you in this journey.

The specific aims and objectives that you set are up to you, but we do ask that these focus on employability and respect the journey so far. This one to one stage is now about objectives **three** and **four** (repeated below):

- **To explore future pathways using the experience and perspectives of employability mentors**
- **To undertake actions based on new learning to think, speak and act differently in order to become the professional they (the students) seek to be**

The student mentees journey so far

At this point the student mentee will have successfully undertaken the following process:



Heard about Employability Mentoring at the university and then made a conscious decision to find out more



Submitted an electronic form expressing to meet with us as a project to learn more about mentoring and employability



Met with us to explore their own employability and consider mentoring as a tool to develop themselves as a professional further



Undertaken reflective exercises to diagnose a current position, then identified a future desired state as a professional and finally evaluated that experience



Registered formally for the project detailing what they want to get out of Employability Mentoring and shared that with us alongside a list of preferences



Attended an induction and mentoring training session to prepare them for their first mentoring experience in a group setting with a range of industry mentors



Attended at least one group mentoring session alongside other students to ask questions and learn from a range of perspectives from a number of employability mentors from the scheme and then evaluated that experience



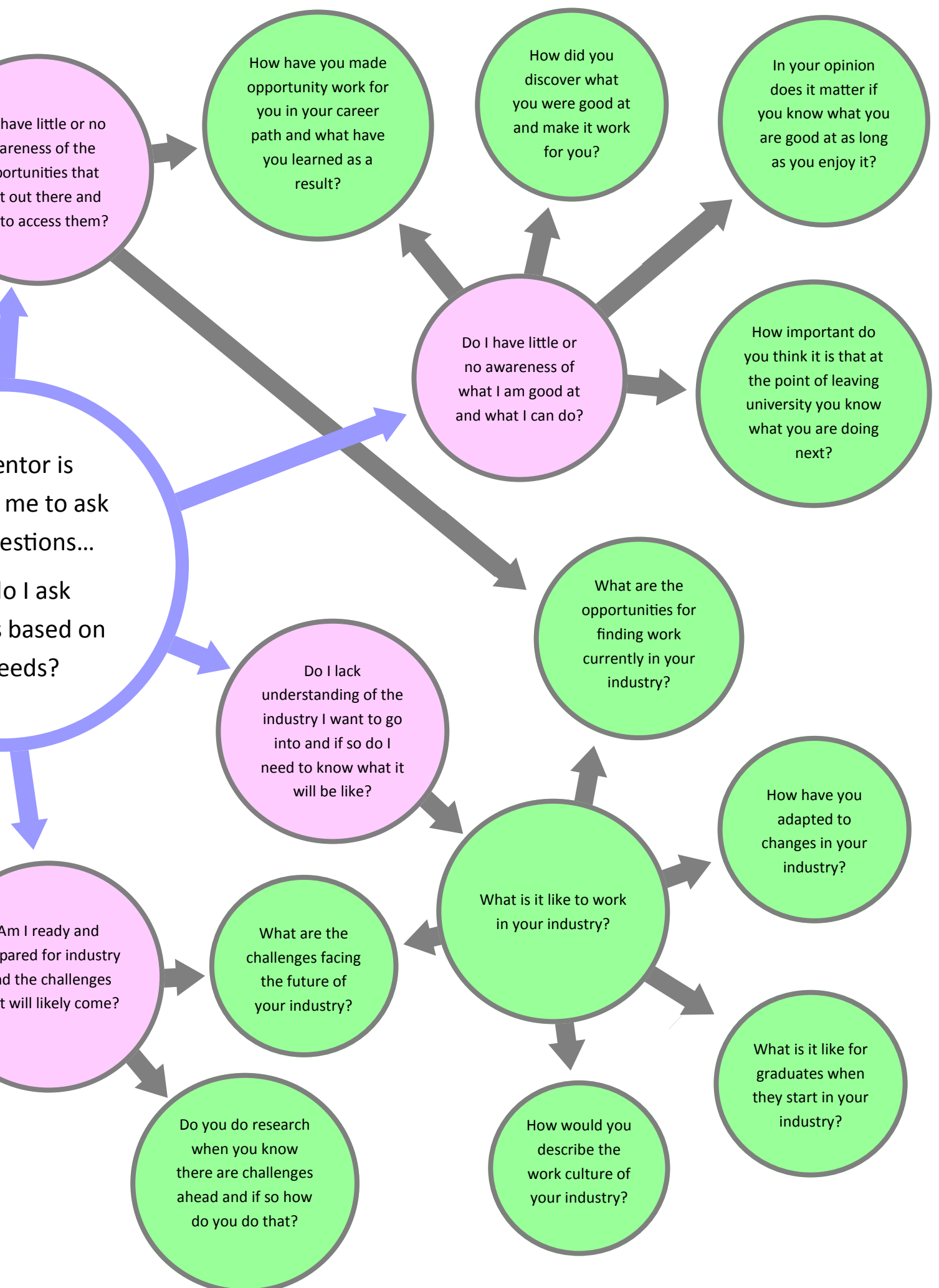
Finally linked to a one-to-one mentor to develop an ongoing relationship to learn more from an individual mentors experience

The above process is all about assessing commitment and helping to ensure that those students allocated to a mentor have been through a quality system designed to help them make the most of mentoring. It is also in place to give mentors confidence that their time and effort will be respected when it comes to one to one mentoring at this current point.

Example questions to try out with a mentor

Pink circles state a potential issue... Green circles state a sample question to ask about that issue





The big first meeting/call!

The first meeting / call with each other

Your first meeting is a critical one, as it will set the tone of the relationship. Use the opportunity to get off to a great start. Take time to get to know each other by sharing useful information when it comes to your background and where you are right now. You can do this by keeping the flow of conversation 'two-way'. When you do this you can discuss what you hope to achieve in the coming months.

Planning for my first mentoring meeting / call and understanding my role

Please remember that mentoring is a **serious commitment** that you will be undertaking and we urge you to treat it as such. First and foremost, the mentor's time is **voluntary**... They are not paid for their work with a mentee and we respect and value this contribution to the mentees development. For both mentor or mentee, your time is precious therefore your key commitments must be:

- Committing to be on time for each meeting / call
- Committing to meet / call each and every session you agree between you both
- Committing to undertake tasks as agreed outside of meetings / calls (if you mutually agree to do so)
- Committing to open, regular communication with each other

Setting up the first meeting

We will match you with each other and provide you both with contact details. As soon as you have the details we ask the **mentee** to please make contact. The mentee must be proactive and arrange an appointment to get going as soon as possible.

What will I need to do before I meet them?

When you have arranged your initial meeting / call, take time to think about the following in advance:

- How often you would like to / can meet / call, for how long and if meeting, then where
- How you will agree to remind each other of future meetings / calls
- How you will treat confidential matters and be respectful of each other
- How you will share information between you in your record keeping

Points to remember

- Don't worry about first meeting / call related nerves
- Introduce yourself and share information professionally and honestly
- It's a two-way process between you so allow time for each other to speak
- Agree expectations around commitment together between you so you are clear from the start
- Talk about what you hope to achieve in the future relating to your ongoing career plans
- Offer an *appropriate* blend of personal and professional information which will give each other the best idea of who you are, your values, how you work and your future plans in terms of employability
- Talk to them about what you personally hope and expect to get out of mentoring, about ambitions and goals you want to achieve in the future

Points to remember

What will we be doing in our mentoring meetings?

In a mentoring relationship the mentee brings the agenda and the mentor listens and responds to the mentee by questioning, reflecting, encouraging, challenging and helping to set actions for development. The specific content will depend on the needs of the individual mentee, however the focus should always be **employability**.

The aim of the project, 'to increase the employability of our students using industry mentors' should always be the core focus. The meetings can be recorded by either mentor or mentee making notes on the record sheets that we have designed for ease of use (please see next page). Meetings /calls should provide an opportunity to discuss a topic and explore new learning from which to set action points for the future.

How often should we be meeting?

We are also providing you with a copy of a three way mentoring agreement (see following pages) which sets out a range of statements that we ask you to comply with in order to help ensure that your experience is managed effectively. It has a specific section in which you both can state how often you would like to engage with each other. Key to a good relationship is open, honest and frequent communication, therefore should a meeting / call time become an issue then it can be rearranged effectively. Managing expectations from the start is vital to a good mentoring relationship so it is worth taking time to explore this openly and honestly with your mentee.

Some helpful dos and don'ts for you to consider and remember before your first meeting call:

What should a mentee do?

- Be open to questions from your mentor should they choose to challenge you on something
- Make effective notes as to what you have discussed and what you will do next
- Be open and professional in what you share with your mentor
- Think about future issues and how to address them positively
- Share your experience and perspective openly and honestly
- Plan and ask questions with a spirit of enquiry

What should a mentee not do?

- Blame the mentor if the advice offered does not work out the way you hoped
- Accept what the mentor says without any challenge, assuming they know best
- Expect the mentor to bring the agenda and to dictate the relationship
- Expect the mentor to have an answer to everything you ask
- Use the meeting as an opportunity to complain about problems
- Bring long lists of what you want the mentor to do for you
- Expect unlimited availability of the mentor day or night

Careful consideration of all of the above will help your relationship to develop the right way.

In the next pages are helpful templates for you to use when meeting / calling each other.

Your 13 week planning tool

WHY HAVE A PLAN?

Having a plan helps you both to structure meetings together and also shows longer term commitment. This document will help you plan and get the most out of the experience.

Also in the next couple of pages there is an one-to-one meeting sheet that will help to you plan each of the individual meetings you have together, so perhaps use those meeting sheets and this plan side by side.

As well as an overall plan, we have guidance here to help you with that all important first meeting. First impressions count, so make a great one. Have a look at the boxes below and identify the topics that you could talk about together to help set the tone for your first discussion.

TOPICS TO DISCUSS

Perhaps tell them why you are involved in this opportunity	Perhaps tell them about any current and / or previous studies	Perhaps share any work and volunteering related history
Perhaps share appropriate info about what interests you	Perhaps tell them what you hope to gain from this mentoring experience	Perhaps ask what they want out of the mentoring experience
Perhaps ask them about their own plans for the future	Perhaps ask are there commitments that will impact on this mentoring	Perhaps ask if they have questions to ask you at this point?

SELF PRESENTATION

When going to meet up/call, think about how you present yourself. This is a taste of what it is like in the working world for the student. Its good practice for conducting themself professionally with others. When you meet with/call them, make sure you consider and apply the following in order to make the best first impression:

- Prepare and follow a plan of action to structure your learning (see next page)
- Be punctual and make the most of the time
- Be polite, warm and show genuine interest in what they have to say
- Ask good questions, listen carefully and respond to what they say. Also ask good follow up questions!

Simple things like these above can go a long way in helping to make the relationship a real success.

A LASTING IMPRESSION

Whenever you meet and whatever you discuss, it's important to finish the meeting mindful of some basic points:

- Confirm what your next actions are with each other - What will you do next?
- Double check that there are no questions you haven't covered that cannot wait till next time you meet
- Confirm with each other what the best way to contact and vice versa
- Make sure that you set a clear time and date for your next meeting/call that you both know you can stick to
- If meeting, make sure you both agree on a specific 'open and accessible' place to meet up for that meeting

YOUR MENTORING, YOUR PLAN

Getting off to a good start with each other is essential to ensure the success of a mentoring relationship. We know from experience that when a mentee is not proactive and organised, the relationship can suffer and the mentor can become frustrated as a result. We are providing you with a template from which you can plan out the first three months with each other. Success here is what the **mentee** makes of it, so it's up to them to make this work.

Below is a 13 week plan template which you can use to plan your mentoring and identify the stages at which you wish to see progress. Here you can personalise your plan with each other and state what you wish to do and by when. Of course things may change as a result of legitimate external factors, however it's good to plan. Check out our recommendations to help steer your thoughts. Your plan has to work for you both. Make sure that you create and shape this plan with each other as it has to work for them too.

Wk	By date:	We recommend by end of this week:	What will you have actually done by the end of this week?	Done?
1		<i>Make contact via email with your mentor to set your first meeting/call</i>		
2		<i>Your first questions are ready and you meet/call each other</i>		
3		<i>Your 13 week plan is set up. You act on actions from first meeting/call</i>		
4		<i>Feed back to the mentor on progress. Set up your next meeting/call</i>		
5		<i>Have your second meeting/call with your mentor and check on your plan</i>		
6		<i>Do a review with us to make sure all is well. Follow up actions with mentor</i>		
7		<i>Keep a record of your actions and your development to tell your mentor</i>		
8		<i>Set up your next meet/call and share your meeting plans with them</i>		
9		<i>Meet with your mentor to ask more questions and share learning</i>		
10		<i>Review your progression so far to see how things are going for you both</i>		
11		<i>Undertake actions and set up next meeting/call (potentially final one)</i>		
12		<i>Undertake meeting/call and review your overall progress since the start</i>		
13		<i>Three month evaluation by the project on progress</i>		

REVIEW AND EVALUATION

We will check in with you here and there to make sure that your mentoring is going well. We will be in contact in the first few weeks to see how things are going. There will also be an evaluation in due course. You can of course keep us updated as to your progress at any point. If you have any issues at all and you want to talk to us about your mentoring, please contact the Project Manager on 0116 207 8979 or at mentoring@dmu.ac.uk. Thank you and good luck!

All-in-one meeting sheet

What is this sheet for?

This sheet has been designed to give you all the information you need to get the most out of your mentoring experience in one short handy document. It's designed to easily show the text for information only (in the purple shaded boxes) and the sections for you to complete. **Please feel free to photocopy this sheet time and again for your use in meetings/calls.**

What is a Mentor?

Mentors are people with experience in life that mentees probably don't have yet, and are people that likely understand some of the struggles. Mentors meet with mentees, listen to them and offer their viewpoint and experience to help them learn more about the things that they want to understanding. They share ways of moving forward with plans and aspirations.

THE PLAN!

Goal setting

If a mentee wants a mentor then its important to know **what** they want from a mentor.

As a mentee it's good to have an idea of a goal that you want to work towards. Think about how you want to improve on something. This could be your understanding of something, your confidence, your skills or even your self awareness. Now it's your chance to start putting some thoughts down to what you want to get out of mentoring. Be clear, because **you** have to communicate this clearly to your mentor. Here are a few things to answer right now as you plan for your mentor session:

What experiences of my mentor do I want to explore? *(Please write your thoughts below)*

.....
.....

What do I want to learn as a result of my meetings with my mentor? *(Please write your thoughts below)*

.....
.....

PREPARATION

Get the most out of your mentor

Your mentor is there because they want to help you. They have asked to help and have lots to share. The key is to unlock their mind by asking great questions to get to the heart of their experience so you can learn from it. There is a skill to asking good questions, so now its time to think about what you ask and how to get the most out of the experience.

What questions can I start off with?

Start by asking questions that begin with *'In your experience'...* and then perhaps ask *'how and why have you done that?'* in order to understand your mentor's thought process. Maybe ask about how they overcame the sorts of barriers that you are facing or might face in your future career. Its all about finding out if they have experienced what you have experienced or will experience. From this, you can relate it to your development and try things using what they shared to help towards your goal.

DMU recommends...

Ask open questions that allow them to go into details rather than with just 'yes' or 'no' answers. For example, don't ask them 'have you applied for jobs?', but rather ask, **'how** have you **gone about** applying for jobs? Listen to what is being shared, and don't be afraid to ask for more details or ask about their feelings at the time. Your questions unlock their answers!

THE BIG QUESTIONS!

The questions I will ask my mentor: (please write your chosen questions below)

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

MY NOTES!

What have I seen or heard from my mentor that could be of use for me? (What key points got my attention that I can use?)

(Free space to doodle your thoughts, reactions, ideas and plans)

AFTERWARDS

What are my actions as a result of this session? (Based on this session, if I want to change, what must I do and by when?)

Action	By when?
1.
2.
3.

DON'T FORGET TO...

Keep these sheets safe as they are a record of what you have done with your mentor. By keeping records you are being organised and can track your progress. These are great skills for the working world and will show your mentor that you value the experience and what they have to share. If the above template doesn't work for you, feel free to create one that does.

If you have any more questions, you can contact the Mentoring Officer on 0116 207 8979 or at mentoring@dmu.ac.uk

The three way mentoring agreement

The purpose of this one page agreement is to clarify the roles and responsibilities of both the mentor and mentee. This project is **not** about guaranteeing a student mentee a job/job offer. We have created an agreement that sets out the responsibilities of all parties in the relationship. This includes the mentee, mentor and our project staff (PS).

In developing a mentoring relationship we seek to ensure that what we set out to achieve is clear. Therefore, detailed below is an agreement that we would respectfully ask all parties to commit to, in order to clarify levels of responsibility and to help ensure that should issues arise they can be easily identified and rectified.

As **mentor** and **mentee** entering into a professional relationship firstly, we ask that you both voluntarily agree:

- 1 To meet / call at least once every _____ weeks for a foreseeable period of _____ months (for you to set)
- 2 To agree to contact each other where necessary between meetings / set calls by telephone/email
- 3 If meeting, to meet either in a public place, on campus or at the workplace, but not at either home addresses
- 4 To be on time/communicate a delay/to contact each other at least _____ hours before if unable to be on time
- 5 To contact the PS if either of you feels that the mentoring match/ongoing relationship is not working
- 6 Not to give or accept money or gifts from each other or to attend under the influence of drugs or alcohol
- 7 To work together to identify goals and actions needed to progress their employability
- 8 To focus on, encourage and support to each other in the pursuit of learning through mentoring
- 9 To maintain regular appropriate contact with each other throughout the agreed time of the relationship
- 10 To behave in a warm, friendly, non-judgemental manner that respects the decisions each other makes
- 11 To update the PS on the progress of the mentoring relationship and any changes/issues in the relationship
- 12 To keep the content of meetings/calls confidential, unless information is disclosed that leads to concerns about the other persons/someone else's welfare/safety in which case it must be reported to the PS
- 13 To be honest, professional and provide constructive feedback to each other
- 14 To report any issues/incidents/accidents that arises as a result of mentoring to the PS
- 15 To keep appropriate records from meetings using forms and processes provided by the PS in this booklet
- 16 To keep the PS and each other informed of changes to contact details or ability to be part of this project
- 17 To work with each other to explore potential pathways using the mentors experience regarding employability
- 18 To undertake actions that result in new learning being adopted by the mentee to think, speak and act differently
- 19 To ensure that the arrangement of meetings/calls does not conflict with prearranged tuition times at DMU

In supporting this relationship, the role of the **PS** is:

- 20 To provide clear guidance on respectful practice between mentors and mentees
- 21 To provide effective support to both mentors and mentees throughout
- 22 To communicate any aspects of change within the Employability Mentoring scheme to all parties
- 23 To respond fairly and promptly to issues when and where they occur, using project quality systems
- 24 To be professional in attitude and to respect confidentiality at all times

We respectfully ask that you join us in committing to each other and adhering to the above. Thank you.

What if there is an issue?

Below are a few questions you might have about mentoring. The first thing to remember is that we are here at the end of an email or phone to talk to. Where possible we can meet with you, talk things through and try and work out the issue alongside you.

What happens if things do not work out?

The three way mentoring agreement that we provide here will help to ensure that mentoring is a quality experience for you. However we appreciate that sometimes things might not work out the way we plan. Should the mentoring experience not be working out for you, we would initially encourage you to speak openly to each other to discuss this. If this is difficult to do, you can contact us and we will support you in dealing with the issue.

What happens after the mentoring comes to an end?

After the sessions are over and the mentoring comes to an end, please contact us to inform us and we will look to evaluate the experience with you. Should you both mutually agree that you would like to remain in contact and continue mentoring, we can offer guidance to support you following the evaluation. If the mentoring comes to an end earlier than expected and you are happy with your experience and wish to bring things to a close, that is fine. Just let us know so we can evaluate at the end.

Please take mentoring seriously

Taking mentoring seriously is good practice for developing meaningful professional relationships. Every day people in industry share experiences and use each other to advance their development and build on their professional skills and knowledge. This is a great opportunity to do the same and to develop your own understanding of mentoring.

Final things to remember...

- Don't worry if you don't hit it off brilliantly at the start. Like many relationships in life it might take a little while to get settled. The more time you invest in it, the better it should get.
- This is a two-way learning experience so you can learn lots from it, both for now and in the future
- Respect the relationship. You are both giving time and energy out of choice so it's important to get involved and to meet/call as agreed.
- Enjoy the experience! Quality time with another person to talk about your self-improvement is something to be valued.
- We are here on hand to help and support you both every step of the way. We are just a phone call, text, email away. Please do ask. Good luck!

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