



Mentoring @ Strathclyde

A mentoring scheme
to support research staff
with their career
development



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Foreword



I am delighted to introduce the mentoring scheme for research staff to support career development. Mentoring has long been a feature of developing researchers here at Strathclyde, and there has been significant investment in researcher development which has allowed this scheme to be developed.

We are committed to on-going development of all our people throughout their careers and there are varied opportunities available to support this. The mentoring scheme sits well with our internationally regarded research environment, offers career and personal development and contributes to collaboration and interdisciplinary working.

This handbook explains the mentoring scheme and what it can offer you as a researcher seeking development as well as those who would wish to be a mentor. It will also support mentoring practice. The scheme is open to all researchers and provides opportunities to the wider academic community.

I hope you will take part in the mentoring scheme, that the information in this handbook is helpful and you can make use of the opportunities which it offers.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James McDonald". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Professor Sir Jim McDonald
Principal and Vice-Chancellor



Introduction



This booklet will guide you through the University of Strathclyde mentoring scheme for research staff as well as offer guidance and advice on how best to develop a mentoring relationship.

It includes:

- Information about mentoring – what it is and the benefits.
- The Strathclyde mentoring scheme to support research staff – how it works and how to get involved.
- Guidance on the mentoring relationship – how to make it work for you.
- Support which is available and next steps.

If you are interested in finding a mentor, or are interested in being a mentor, you may wish to join the scheme. Staff already participating in a mentoring relationship may also wish to participate in this scheme in order to receive additional guidance and support on how best to structure the relationship.

University of Strathclyde is committed to providing a supportive environment for Researchers. The mentoring scheme is part of a range of development opportunities for research staff within the University. Overall, it is supporting researchers to achieve their full potential.

If you have any questions, please get in touch:

Mentoring Scheme Co-ordinator
Organisational & Staff Development Unit
e-mail: osdu@strath.ac.uk
phone: 0141 548 4332

What is mentoring?

Mentoring is a one-to-one supportive relationship focused on learning and development which will help individuals fulfil their potential. In essence it is a non-judgemental relationship which will facilitate and lead to career development. The mentoring process happens when:

“an experienced individual, outside the reporting relationship, holds regular meetings and discussions and takes personal interest in guiding and supporting the development of a less experienced person in progressing within and beyond their immediate role.”
(Hale 2000)

A mentoring relationship is outwith the direct line management relationship. The mentoring scheme will match a person with relevant experience (the mentor) to a researcher who can benefit from this experience (the mentee). It's a partnership where both the mentee and mentor will benefit and develop through the relationship.

Mentoring in Action

Mentoring is a flexible, tailored development approach which is helpful in developing our research talent.

Areas where it can be particularly helpful are:

- Supporting academic staff who have recently been promoted.
- Assisting new international research and academic staff to understand the UK context and systems.
- Supporting women in Science, Engineering and Technology (SET).
- Supporting individuals with career transitions.

Benefits of Mentoring

Overall, mentoring will contribute towards a supportive research environment.

Benefits for the individual mentee include:

- support for career and professional development;
- enhanced networking;
- help with setting and achieving goals;
- support, encouragement and increased confidence;
- to have a sounding board, outwith their usual work area;
- find solutions to challenges.

For the mentor, benefits include:

- develop interpersonal and communication skills;
- satisfaction from helping another person grow and develop;
- an opportunity to reflect on one's own practice;
- increased self awareness;
- build leadership skills;
- offer new perspectives on the research culture of the University.

For the University, benefits include:

- a supportive research environment;
- enhancing research performance;
- assisting with the number of research and academic staff recognised internationally;
- increased commitment to the institution.

Mentoring @ Strathclyde: An Introduction

Many members of staff benefit from informal mentoring opportunities. This mentoring scheme for research staff provides a structured format which promotes fair and equal access to mentoring support, should that be appropriate for the individual in supporting them fulfil their career development goals. It will also enhance more informal mentoring activity at Strathclyde by the support which is available as a feature of the scheme.

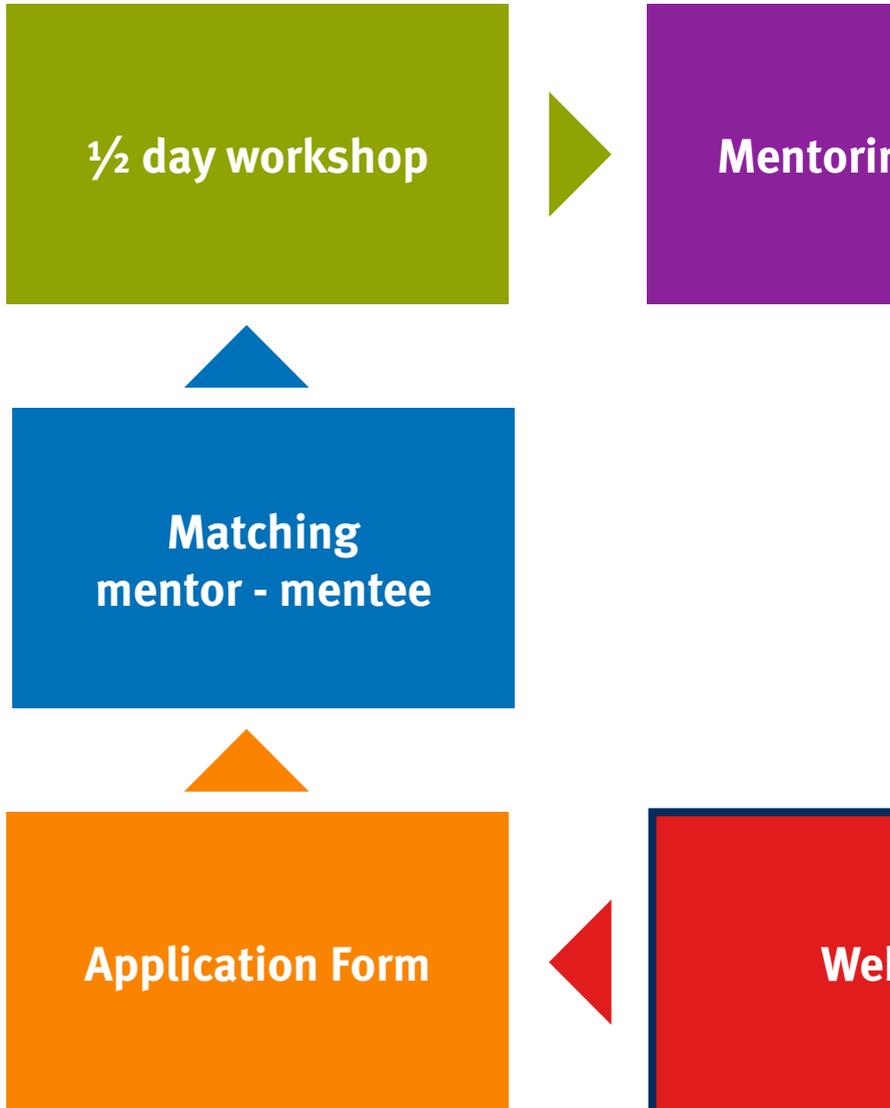
Goals of the Scheme

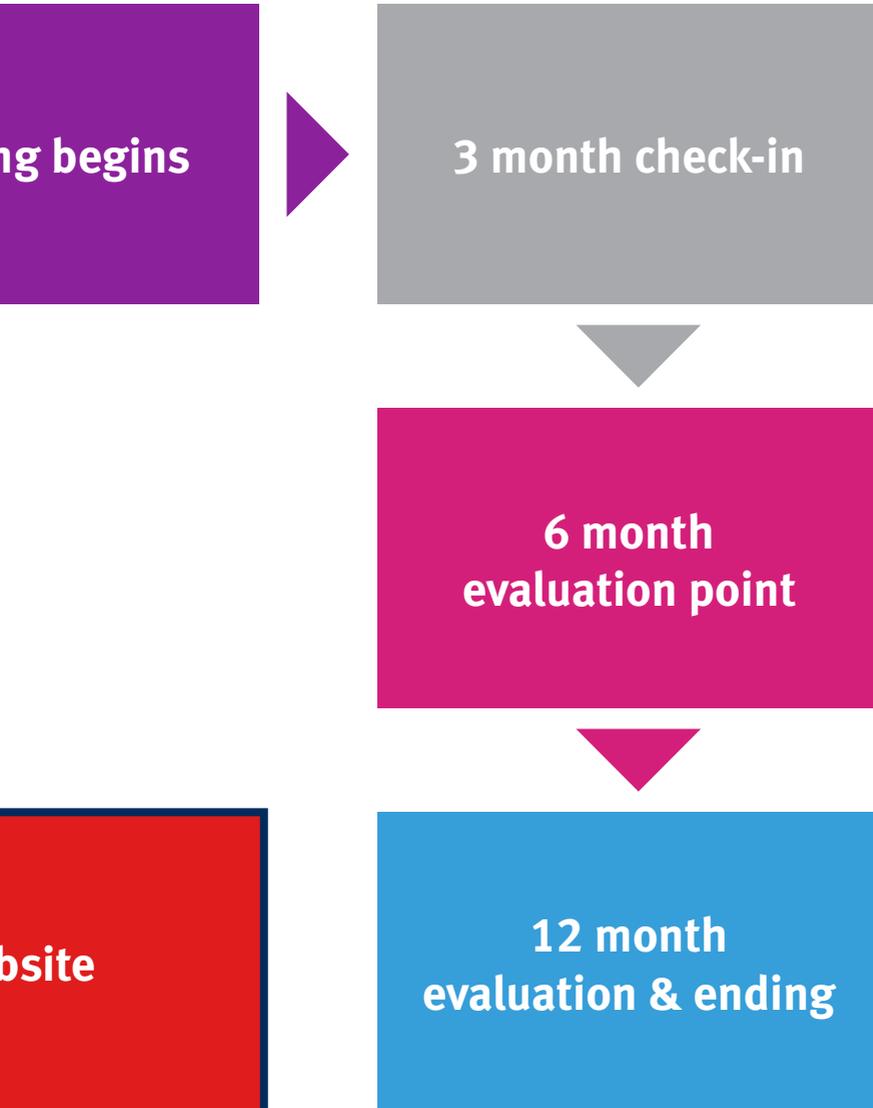
The mentoring scheme for research staff at Strathclyde has the following goals:

1. To support researchers throughout the University with their career development.
2. To support researchers in taking greater responsibility with their development.
3. To increase interdisciplinary networking and mentoring.
4. To facilitate the sharing of knowledge and expertise between staff at different levels in their career.

In addition to these goals, the individual mentee will set their own goals on what they want to achieve from the relationship. Further information on this can be found on page 12.

Getting Started - The Process





Is mentoring right for you?

To help you decide if mentoring is right for you, there are a number of sources of support to guide you through the process.

Website – www.strath.ac.uk/hr/mentoringstrathclyde

You will find information on the mentoring scheme as well as other resources on mentoring in general. If you then decide you would like to join the scheme either as a mentor or mentee, please complete an application form.



The **Application Form** can be found on-line at
www.strath.ac.uk/hr/mentoringstrathclyde

The mentoring scheme will be an annual process. Applications will be in-line with that timescale. However if you need a mentor outwith that timescale then please do join the scheme and we will do all we can to find you a mentor or mentee.



Matching - to enable mentors and mentees to be ‘matched’ the new annual cycle of the scheme will be publicised and staff wishing to be involved will register via the online form. Based on the information given on the form and the available mentors and mentees in the scheme, a provisional match will be made. You will be notified via email. A mentor/mentee will be within your subject/research area, but not likely to come from within your department or research team.



½ day workshop - You will then be invited to attend a ½ day workshop which will give you the opportunity to find out about the scheme, consider your part in the mentoring relationship and hear about others’ mentoring experience.



3 month check-in - The relationship begins. We will do a short check-in with you 3 months after the workshop via email.



Mid-point Evaluation - We will ask for some feedback on how things are going, via a questionnaire at the 6 month point.



12 month evaluation - At the 12 month point we will ask for some final feedback. We will also ask whether you will be continuing with the relationship and if not, if you wish to continue to be part of the scheme either as a mentor or mentee in a different relationship or in a different role.

Key Features

The Scheme has a number of key features. It is:

- **Voluntary** – it is up to each individual – mentor or mentee – if they wish to join the scheme. It is the voluntary nature which will ensure the relationship and outcomes from it are as beneficial as possible.
- **Flexible** – the relationship that is developed between the mentor and mentee should be flexible enough to respond to the needs brought by the individuals. It is up to the pairs to determine when and where they meet, duration of sessions, what to discuss and how to work. Principally, however, it is the Mentee that is expected to drive the relationship.
- **The mentee drives the process** – from making the first contact with their mentor to ensuring that subsequent meetings are arranged, planned and prepared for.
- **Timeframe** – it's important to define how long the relationship should last. The scheme allows for a 12 month relationship, with the option of extending that if appropriate. Equally, if the objectives are met before the 12 month timeframe, you can agree to end the mentoring arrangement. So that everyone is kept on-track, a 6 monthly evaluation will be conducted in addition to an evaluation at 12 months if required. In terms of time commitment, involvement from both parties is likely to be around 1 to 2 hours per month. This is only a guide and is at the discretion of the mentor and mentee.
- **Support** – there is dedicated website space with resources. Development sessions will also be offered for both mentors and mentees. There is also a Scheme Co-ordinator who oversees the management of the scheme.
- **Confidential** – for any mentoring relationship to be successful it must be confidential. It is up to each individual if they wish to tell their line manager that they are entering into a mentoring relationship and if so they do not need to disclose the content of mentoring meetings/sessions or who their mentor is. Caveats will apply where confidentiality cannot be maintained; these will be agreed between both parties.

If there are any issues or concerns with the mentoring relationship these should be raised initially with each other. If further support is required then the Scheme Co-ordinator should be contacted.

Being a Mentor

A mentor can take on many roles within the mentoring relationship using a range of skills and behaviours. A good mentor will be flexible enough to respond to the needs of the mentee and the situation. Typical roles are:

Expert - a source of technical / professional knowledge

Sounding Board - testing ideas and suggestions

Critical Friend - supporting, giving constructive feedback

Guide - showing how the University and associated systems work

Adviser - giving advice, however the mentee decides how best to use that advice

Facilitator - supporting to help make things happen, highlighting opportunities, access to key people

Motivator - encouraging and motivating to achieve goals

Goal Setter - helping set and focus on goals

Challenger - challenging assumptions, encouraging different ways of thinking

Being Mentored

You may question whether mentoring is right for you and what is involved. It will take time and effort on your part. Some factors to consider before entering into a mentoring relationship are:

Expectations

Everyone will have different expectations around what mentoring will give them. It is worthwhile to be clear on yours. A few questions to help you do that are:



Responsibilities

In return, there will be responsibilities. A key feature of this scheme is the individual taking overall responsibility and driving forward the mentoring process; therefore, you need to consider taking the lead on the following aspects to ensure that the process is successful:

- Arrange meetings – the practical aspects of arranging time, date and venue for your meetings.
- Keep-on-track – taking the time to plan for each meeting; make contact with your mentor if it's been a while since you last met; get things back on track, if things have slipped.
- Be honest – with yourself, about how your progress is going. Also, be honest with your mentor, about how the relationship is going – does the focus need to change? Has the 'real work' been completed, however the relationship continues? Is there enough challenge versus support for instance, advice giving versus questioning?
- Listen to feedback – listen to what your mentor says. Ask questions, although you don't have to agree with the answers.
- Follow up – on agreed actions and take responsibility for next steps. Being in a mentoring relationship is about development, so to make progress ensure that your actions are completed.

The Mentoring Relationship



Once the mentoring relationship gets underway, there are different phases to look out for. The timeline above will help you navigate through the first 12 months.

Beginnings (3 months)

The start of the mentoring relationship is a time where rapport and trust should be developed and the ground rules set. Clarity on the purpose and outcome of the mentoring is essential and should be agreed at this point.

It is helpful to establish a mentoring agreement or contract, which sets out what needs to be done and how. Appendix 1 shows an example. This has been found to be helpful for keeping the process focussed. As the relationship develops and other issues emerge these can easily be added or a new agreement made.

Middle (6 months)

This part of the relationship is when most of the work will be done. Many see this as the most rewarding part of the relationship, as it often involves a much deeper level of challenge, probing and analysis.

Some possible questions to guide you at this stage are:

How are your goals progressing?

When you reflect on your initial agreement, is it still helpful?

How would you describe the relationship?

Some of the likely activities that you may notice during the mentoring sessions at this stage are:



Endings (12 months)

This final phase is ending and winding down the relationship, if your mentoring relationship is based on a 12 month contract. Research points out that mentoring relationships that officially 'end' are far more satisfying than those which drift. It is helpful to consider the following to assist with this:

- Has the purpose and outcome been met? Any further work required?
- What are the next steps?
- Where does the relationship go from here? Will you stay in touch? Keep the mentoring going?

Further Sources of Support

Mentoring @ Strathclyde website

The Organisational and Staff Development Unit website has an area dedicated to mentoring. There are a number of articles and guides which offer advice to support mentoring practice throughout the University.

<http://www.strath.ac.uk/hr/mentoringstrathclyde/>

Further Reading

David Clutterbuck Partnership
www.davidclutterbuckpartnership.com
contains useful articles on mentoring.

Employee Counselling Service

If through the mentoring process it has raised any issues which you believe further help is necessary, you may wish to contact the Employee Counselling Service.

<http://www.empcs.org.uk/>

Additional Support

Further support can be found from:
Mentoring Scheme Co-ordinator
Organisational & Staff Development Unit
Level 4, Graham Hills Building
40 George Street
E: osdu@strath.ac.uk
T: 0141 548 4332



“

Mentoring is a brain to pick,
an ear to listen, and a push in
the right direction.”

John C. Crosby

Appendix 1

Mentoring @ Strathclyde: A mentoring scheme to support research staff with their career development

Mentoring Agreement

Purpose & Outcome:

(expectations, goals, areas to focus on)

Working Together:

(ground rules, confidentiality, responsibilities)

Meetings:

(when, where, length of session, frequency)

Other Points:

Signed (Mentee): _____

Signed (Mentor): _____

Date: _____

Appendix 1 Continued

Mentoring @ Strathclyde:
A mentoring scheme to support research staff with their
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Mentoring Agreement

continued...

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