



## Dev Sanskriti Vishwavidyalaya – A Guide For

### Mentors

(Version 1.0)



**Controlled Document – Must not be copied in whole or in parts by any means without the written authorization of Chancellor, Vice Chancellor / Pro Vice Chancellor of Dev Sanskriti Vishwavidyalaya.**

**Document Release Notice**

This document is released for use in Dev Sanskriti Vishwavidyalaya (DSVV) with effect from <DD-MMM-YYYY> and is subject to DSVV Document Control Procedure.

**Approved By:**

**Authorized By:**



## Document Version Control

Revision / version No.	Effective Date	Document Release/Revision Date	Revision Description	Section	Rationale for Change	Change Type (Add/Modify/Delete)	Document Process/Policy Revision
1.0	30-Dec-2020	30-Dec-2020	First Release	NA	NA	NA	NA



## Contents

Introduction .....	7
Being a Mentor .....	7
Advantages .....	7
Having a Mentor .....	7
Qualities of a Mentor .....	8
Strategy of working as Mentor .....	8
Duties of a Mentor .....	8
Mentoring Schemes .....	9
Pre-arrival Mentoring .....	9
Mentoring For New Students .....	9
Academic Mentor .....	11
Placement mentoring .....	11
Graduate E-mentoring .....	11
Postgraduate Mentoring .....	12
Professional Mentoring .....	12
Roles of Mentor .....	12
Disciplinary Guide .....	13
Skills development consultant .....	13
Career consultant .....	13
Changing Mentors .....	13
Responsibilities of Mentee .....	14
Learn about what mentors can offer .....	15
Availability .....	15
Communication .....	15
Workload & Financial Support .....	15
Publishing .....	15
Reputation With Graduate Students & Staff .....	15
Reputation within the field .....	16
Clarify expectations .....	16



Mentoring international students .....	16
Language & Culture .....	16
Academic Rules .....	17
Social stresses .....	17
Recommendations .....	17
Mentoring Process .....	17
Goals and work plans .....	17
Meetings .....	17
Feedback .....	17
Drafts .....	18
Publishing and presenting .....	18
Intellectual property .....	18
Research and human subjects .....	18
Confidentiality .....	18
Recommendation letters .....	18
What to do if problems arise .....	18
The mentor or adviser .....	19
Other mentors or supervisory committee members .....	19
Peers .....	19
Other Faculty .....	19
Department Staff .....	19
Department HOD .....	19
What a good mentor does .....	19
Engages students in conversation .....	19
Demystifies graduate school for students .....	19
Provides constructive and supportive feedback .....	20
Provides encouragement .....	20
Fosters networks and multiple mentors .....	20
Looks out for students' interests .....	20
Thinks about students' mentoring needs .....	20



Treats students with respect .....	21
Provides a personal touch .....	21
Development stages of the mentoring relationship .....	21
How can I build an effective mentoring relationship? .....	22
Mentoring Agreement & Action Plan .....	24



## Introduction

A mentor can be defined as a counsellor who helps the students evolve into an improved professional and a good human being. A mentor guides the students through the course of degree and accordingly finds the way to help them. Finding a good and reliable mentor is a blessing indeed. He/she tries to provide a support system and helps out in solving the challenges as they come along the way.

*A Japanese proverb says that one day with a good mentor is worth one thousand days of diligent study. With a good mentor, mentees are supported, encouraged and inspired as they grow in their profession...*

**Note** – In academic year 2021-22 we are only rolling out “Mentoring for new students”.

## Being a Mentor

Mentors play a crucial role in every aspect of life. The importance of being a mentor becomes more significant in the education sector. Becoming a mentor revolves around contributing back to the community. It becomes an investment in the future by guiding young students and newbie professionals to the right resources and techniques.

## Advantages

- **Enhancing communication skills:** Providing mentorship to students from other organizations helps you effectively increasing your conveying and listening skills.
- **Promoting connection and coordination:** While mentoring students or newbie professionals, you continue to expand your social circle and meet new resources as time passes.
- **Identifying one-self:** Mentoring someone not only enables you to be prepared for answering any query but also highlights your journey for you. And one can always tighten the loose ends.
- You benefit from a sense of fulfilment and personal growth
- **Career development and continued professional development:** developing interpersonal skills and honing management and coaching skills
- **New perspective:** provides an opportunity to look at their job with fresh eyes and encourage self-reflection
- **Increased understanding:** keeping up-to-date with developments in higher education, qualification structures and the needs and experiences of students/graduates
- Gain perspective on how a discipline operates academically, socially, and politically
- A great way of ‘giving back’ to their university and keeping in touch with DSVV

## Having a Mentor

A mentor can play a diversified role when it comes to student or professional life. The importance of having a mentor increases when you are a university student and are about to start devising a career path. The role of a mentor is necessary here as he/she can help you avoid the unnecessary turn around and can guide you to desired outcomes. Some of the benefits that can be associated with becoming a mentee can be:

- **Support system:** With having a proper guideline, a mentor can guide you to become what you are passionate about as a person. A mentor can also provide a support system that you can rely upon.



- **Expanding professional network:** With the help of a mentor, you can become familiar with the top-notch industry or academics experts. Expanding your professional network can help you out in the future.
- **Meaningful collaborations:** Often mentors engage their mentees in a research or leadership role as a collaborator.

## Qualities of a Mentor

- Consider a Mentee as a human being first.
- Allow him/her to explore options before pointing at the right course of direction.
- Listen to him/her first and communicate the guidelines afterward.
- Help him/her explore his/her potential and instill the virtues of confidentiality.
- Empower him / her with your research / leadership knowledge and evaluate his / her developed skills from time to time.
- Be empathetic and polite!

## Strategy of working as Mentor

- **Have a clear-cut vision:** You can help out students if you have a clear vision of your career aspirations. Becoming an expert in your field is what will help you impart knowledge to fellows and young students.
- **Establish a sound network:** Finding and locating the best mentee is a hideous task. However, with a proper network and applying social media to reach out to your best benefit, one can find valuable mentees through proper networking.
- **Define proper guidelines:** Set and propagate among your mentees a proper guideline upon which mentor-mentee relationship can establish. Clearing any misconception and creating a proper timetable at the very beginning can discard various complications later.
- **Empower the young generation:** Instead of spoon-feeding, the focus should be more on how to enable young students to solve their problems effectively. Set a direction and let them do the rest.

## Duties of a Mentor

- Making sure the mentee knows all the information's and procedures most of which can be found in the University website
- Giving academic guidance
- Helping the student in time management
- Helping the student during examination period
- Monitoring the student's GPA and guiding him/her in case it starting dropping
- Encouraging the mentee to increase his / her academic activities and using various electronic communications
- Planning and organizing the supervising process
- Preparing a rapid report for each student to be given to the head of the department. The report should contain the level of the student in case of failing or a drop in the GPA
- Sincere concern for the student's success
- Knowledge of all the university's policies and procedures in all its aspects
- Familiarity with the academic year's agendas and admissions





- He should help mentee to make decisions and not take decisions for him / her
- Participating in seminars and workshops to develop supervision skills
- Keeping the secrecy of information's regarding the student and his academic record

## Mentoring Schemes

### Pre-arrival Mentoring

The transition from school, college or work to university is life changing but can also be daunting. At this important time, we are pleased to be able to offer you the opportunity of benefitting from the DSVV's Pre-arrival E-Mentoring programme.

You can benefit from the experience of someone who remembers how it feels starting at university, perhaps even moving to a new city or country, and knows the questions they had when they were in your position. Our mentors are current DSVV students who will communicate with you via e-mail, to give you the chance to find out more about life at DSVV and provide reassurance and friendly advice. They will be available via e-mail until the start of term. Hearing about the experiences of a current student who remembers what it was like for them when they started at DSVV can help you to settle in quickly and make the most of your time here.

If you have accepted a place at DSVV and would like to be matched to an e-mentor, simply register your details on our online form. Once we have your details we will match you to a suitable e-mentor as soon as possible, then contact you with details of your e-mentor who should be in touch with you shortly afterwards.

The Pre-arrival E-mentoring lasts until your onboarding at DSVV is complete.

### Mentoring For New Students

Mentoring for new students is for new undergraduate first year students, students on foundation degrees and exchange students. As a new student, you might be new to city and/or India, living away from home for the first time.

Duration – Mentoring will start from the day new students are onboarded on university campus, till end of 1<sup>st</sup> semester. Current DSVV students who are in 3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> semester can become mentors.

Having the support of a current student, who remembers what it was like for them when they started at DSVV can help new students to settle in quickly and make the most of their time here.

This is an opportunity to find out more about life at DSVV, and help you feel better prepared about starting your university career. It is a chance to ask those questions that you may feel you can only ask a fellow student! By communicating with a current student, you can benefit from their knowledge and experiences and they will be able to give you a valuable insight into your first year.

Topics you might wish to discuss:

- Accommodation



- Food
- Culture
- what to bring
- the social life
- making friends
- any questions about settling in to life in DSVV
- university processes & procedures

Mentors provide their Mentees with support on:

- Finding services on campus
- Making friends and getting involved with student societies
- Getting to grips with university processes
- Dealing with the 'culture shock' of a new environment
- Shopping and budgeting
- Finding things to do and places of interest in the city
- Achieving a good life / study balance
- Coursework, module choices or exams and revision

## *Do's & Dont's*

DO...

- Check your emails regularly and respond promptly
- Use plain language, be concise and to the point
- Use blank spaces between paragraphs – keep paragraphs short as they are easier to read
- Re-read your email before sending to ensure that it says what you mean it to say
- Be flexible when reading other people's email – remember they may not have meant to say what they did in that way! If you are unclear as to what they are saying, ask for clarification (but be polite)
- Respect other people's views and concerns
- Provide feedback to the e-mentoring co-ordinator when requested

DON'T...

- put off reading and replying to your emails
- jump to conclusions, make assumptions or be judgemental
- use offensive or inappropriate language
- use CAPITALS as this looks like you are shouting
- criticise other people – other students or university staff
- gossip about your mentor / mentee to other people – this is a confidential service
- give out personal information, home address, mobile number etc – e-mentoring is via email only and we do not require mentors/mentees to give out personal information as part of the scheme.



**Important note: Student mentors cannot give legal advice or advice on visas, or meet you at the airport, bus / railway station etc.**

## Academic Mentor

The academic mentor is a faculty member / senior student who offers guidance to the students in a study program. The academic mentor must follow up with the student from his/her acceptance in the program until he/she obtains the degree he/she is studying for. The mentor is, therefore, responsible for the student/s and should give him/her all the help needed.

## Placement mentoring

Placement Mentors can offer support on:

- Considering the benefits of the placement year
- Deciding how to choose the right placement
- Practical tips on job applications and interview techniques
- Developing a range of transferable skills, e.g., time management
- Examining career options
- Providing an insight into your final year
- Learning from their experiences

Please contact Training and Placement cell for more details.

## Graduate E-mentoring

DSVV'S Graduate E-Mentoring scheme is a voluntary programme designed to offer final year undergraduates the opportunity of being mentored by a recent DSVV graduate. Graduate e-mentoring allows DSVV graduates / alumni to offer information, support and guidance to current final year students via email. Current final years studying at DSVV are given the opportunity to discuss any issues and ask any questions about life after DSVV, via email with an DSVV graduate.

This is an opportunity for undergraduate students to benefit from an DSVV graduate's experience of final year study and to find out more about life after DSVV, to help feel better prepared about starting their graduate career. By communicating with a graduate, students can benefit from their experience of their transition out of university and into the world of work, further study, volunteering, etc.

A mentor can support an undergraduate by:

- Giving them support and guidance in their transition through final year and graduation
- Offering personal and professional development, whether focused on career development, postgraduate study or volunteering
- Giving them a valuable insight into their own transition from university into their career
- Assisting them with practical tips on planning a successful job search strategy
- Offering advice and guidance with their career planning and their transition from undergraduate to young professional
- Developing understanding, skills and problem-solving support
- Encouraging reflection and celebrating effective practice, identifying areas for development and improving self-confidence



Topics that may be discussed

- Final year study
- Gap years and its implications
- Volunteering and how to improve employability
- Postgraduate study
- Choices made since graduating in general, including graduate recruitment
- A particular career area
- Accommodation – graduate ‘house shares’/ moving back home

## Postgraduate Mentoring

The Postgraduate Mentoring Scheme supports the integration and student experience of newly arriving postgraduate students by matching them with more experienced postgraduate students who act as peer mentors.

The transition to postgraduate study is exciting but can also sometimes be daunting. A postgraduate student may be new to the city or may live off campus, may be the first in their family to go on to postgraduate study, they may be returning to education after some years, or may be the only one of their group of friends to come to Aston University.

Having the support and guidance of an experienced Postgraduate Mentor can help new postgraduate students to settle in quickly and make the most of the time at the university. The nature of support is primarily pastoral, and may include practical advice and tips to help new students integrate into the university and school of study.

The mentoring support is available in the first year of postgraduate study and usually takes place face to face or electronically (e-mentoring). It is a voluntary ‘peer mentoring’ scheme which is flexible, confidential, and fits around student availability.

Postgraduate mentors are experienced Postgraduate students / University Professors who provide pastoral support, offer advice, guidance and practical tips. They act as a sounding board, helping first year Postgraduates to focus their thinking and find new ways to explore and solve problems. They are not supervisors and do not get involved in the academic or technical aspects of Phd support. Subject matching is not always possible and Mentors and mentees are matched according to availability or other preferences.

## Professional Mentoring

All undergraduates are exposed to professional industry mentors who offer ‘real life’ business advice and provide an insight into leading organizations. Please contact training and placement cell for more details.

## Roles of Mentor

Mentors play many roles in your life — guide, counselor, adviser, consultant, tutor, teacher and guru. A mentor’s combination of professional expertise, personal style and approach to facilitating learning influences the kind of mentoring you will receive.



Effective mentoring is multidimensional as mentors play three core roles to assist your educational, professional and personal growth.

## Disciplinary Guide

The role of a disciplinary guide is to help mentee become a contributing member of their discipline. This guidance helps mentee to understand how his / her discipline has evolved as a knowledge enterprise; recognize novel questions; identify innovative ways of engaging them through teaching and collaborative research projects; and see their discipline, its questions and methodologies in relation other fields. Another role of the disciplinary guide is to mentee grasp the impact their discipline has on the world and to assist them in pursuing the impact they hope to have.

## Skills development consultant

Mentor can help in developing intellectual and professional skills including, and going beyond, those related to research.

**Oral and written communication skills** - These includes:

- clearly expressing the results of mentees work
- translating field-specific knowledge for teaching and interacting with the public
- persuading others, such as funders, organizations and conference audiences, of the value of your work

**Team-oriented skills** - Some of the most innovative learning occurs in teams that problem solve collaboratively. Increasingly, complex problems require interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary solutions. Mentor can help in developing collaborative, problem-solving skills by organizing group exercises and projects.

**Leadership skills** - As a graduate student, mentee can become an intellectual leader in many settings. Mentors invite mentees to assume leadership roles throughout graduate study — for example, in seminars, student government, disciplinary societies and community outreach, as well as on departmental or university committees. These activities will help mentees build people skills which are indispensable for your career.

## Career consultant

An effective mentor helps you link aspects of your graduate work with other potential mentors beyond your department — alumni or other professionals in colleges, universities, schools, community groups, the private sector, non-profit organizations, government and industrial laboratories. Mentors outside your department can help you explore career options, so that you learn how your graduate education translates into various professional opportunities.

## Changing Mentors

Mentees priorities for mentoring may change based on their personal and professional growth, rather than by misunderstandings. A good mentor will support mentee in their search for others who can assist them. Mentee can consider below pointers before changing their mentor:

- Try to work through differences with your mentor before you make a final decision



- Seek advice from a faculty member or peer to assess your needs and determine whether a different mentor would be good for you, particularly if you are attempting to change mentors towards the final phase of your graduate program
- Approach another equivalent mentor about being a mentor for you
- Be professional at all times. Focus discussions on your interests and goals and not on negative incidents or difficulties. Avoid doing or saying anything that could have negative ramifications for your future
- Practice diplomatic ways to express to your adviser or mentor why you are considering a change
- Discuss and arrange a timeframe for completing any remaining work with your current adviser before the change takes place
- Complete or update any paperwork that contains information about your adviser, e.g., internship paperwork, thesis, general exam or dissertation committee forms

## Responsibilities of Mentee

- **Be proactive** - Mentee may need to seek out interactions with mentors, approach them openly and initiate discussions
- **Seek out multiple mentors** - Post graduate and doctorate mentees can identify and cultivate multiple potential mentors. They can be faculty members within or outside the University, departmental staff, alumni and other professionals in the community
- **Develop realistic approaches to mentors** - Invest time in assessing what you need from your mentors and request that assistance clearly and professionally. Requesting specific guidance is more effective than general requests for mentorship
- **Be visible** - Being visible in your department is important. Office and hallway conversations help you build relationships and glean vital information. If you have other responsibilities such as a family or work, talk to your mentors about how you can remain engaged in regular happenings
- **Be responsible** - Recognize the value of taking responsibility for your education, which includes developing a vision for your future and taking care of everyday details. Be prompt for meetings with your mentors, and prepare agendas. Update your mentors once a quarter about your progress, and articulate how they can help you
- **Show commitment to your professional development** - Professors commonly point out the importance of students embracing their own work—an important aspect of professional leadership. Initiate or lead study, writing, discussion or interest groups among your peers. Asking a peer or a faculty member to co-author a paper, seeking a grant and applying your scholarship to civic concerns demonstrate your professional commitment
- **Receive criticism in a professional manner** - A core part of intellectual work is exchanging ideas and debating their merits. Accept criticism of your work in a professional manner. Accepting criticism does not mean agreeing with everything that someone says about your work, but rather reflects your willingness to consider and evaluate the merits of other views
- **Let mentors know you appreciate their advice** - Tell your mentors that you value their time and that you use their input productively. After reading books or making contacts your mentor suggests, talk about the results of what you learned. Don't feel compelled to follow every bit of advice, but inform your mentors when their advice is helpful, even when it leads you in an unexpected direction



## Learn about what mentors can offer

Note: - This section is for senior mentees only.

### Availability

- Assess how much time a prospective mentor can provide you by asking about his or her other commitments. Will that amount of time be sufficient for you?
- Ask prospective mentors about their plans. Do they anticipate being in the graduate program for the duration of your degree?
- Will they take sabbaticals or otherwise work away from the department during this time?
- If so, how would you maintain sufficient contact?

### Communication

- Are you comfortable interacting with this person?
- Are you able to communicate your thoughts and ideas effectively?
- Does this person listen attentively to your ideas and concerns, and ask good follow up questions?
- Will you be able to work closely with this person?
- Do you enjoy this person's professional and personal style?

### Workload & Financial Support

- What does the potential mentor consider a normal workload for graduate scholarship outside of your work as a teaching or research assistant?
- How many hours per week does he or she believe you should be spending on your research or creative projects?
- Does the potential mentor have or know of funds to support you?
- Will that financial support remain available until you complete your program?
- Do you see potential for developing a thesis or dissertation topic from the mentor's research?
- Does the mentor have appropriate space and laboratory equipment for your needs? \What is the size of the mentor's research group, and is this size optimal for you?
- Will this person support your search for teaching assistantships?
- Will this mentor be able to help you obtain graduate assistantships or fellowships?
- Will he or she be able to help you achieve the professional development balance you want between teaching and research assistantships?

### Publishing

- Does the potential mentor co-author articles with graduate students? If so, ask about his or her approach to determining first authorship.
- Is the prospective mentor willing to help you prepare your work for publication?
- What publishing contacts does he or she have?

### Reputation With Graduate Students & Staff

- Ask your peers whether the potential mentor has a history of giving proper attention to his or her mentees.



- Can this person provide you with teaching and research opportunities, access to financial resources and guidance for completing a thesis or dissertation?
- Does this person provide students access to professional networks, and assistance in exploring academic and non-academic career development?
- Have former students completed their programs in a timely fashion with this mentor's guidance? If not, why?
- What is the prospective mentor's approach to training graduate students for breadth, as well as depth, in anticipation of careers outside of academia?

## Reputation within the field

- What opinions do others in your field have about the prospective mentor's work?
- What kind of professional positions did others mentored by this person obtain?
- Do you see yourself pursuing those kinds of career paths?
- Read reviews of the potential mentor's work in scholarly journals or convention proceedings, or in award nomination letters.
- Follow up with your prospective mentors via e-mail or phone to thank them for their time and let them know that what you learned was fruitful.
- If you agreed to pursue an idea or topic, let them know your plans and when you will get back in touch.

Take some time to reflect. If you later decide to ask this person to be a mentor, you both will have a better understanding of what each will gain from the relationship. If a mentoring relationship begins to take shape, this understanding will help you and your mentor create a professional development plan that is tailored to your needs.

## Clarify expectations

When students and mentors have clear expectations of one another, relationships are more likely to be productive, enjoyable and mutually beneficial. To prevent misunderstandings, discuss the expectations you and your mentor have of each other, including how they may change over time. Not all mentors and mentees establish formal contracts. Some find formal agreements useful, while others prefer to work under informal agreements.

Be realistic about what any one mentor can do for you, and avoid requesting too much assistance or assistance that is too broad. That is why having multiple mentors is helpful. Remember that mentors can respond better to requests for specific types of assistance than to requests for general mentoring. Analyze what you need from a given mentor and explicitly ask for those things. Part of your task is to develop and demonstrate your abilities as a colleague and a professional. Discuss with your mentor ways that you can take on more responsibility.

## Mentoring international students

### Language & Culture

Despite their many achievements, some international students can feel their competence diminished early in their graduate programs. Linguistic proficiency and lack of awareness of how Indian academic





system works may be initial hurdles to overcome. Most international students have different collaborative or classroom communication patterns.

## Academic Rules

When international graduate students arrive on campus, they need to demystify the Indian culture, the culture of the university and the academic culture in their departments. They discover that policies can be quite different from those in their home institutions or are difficult to interpret.

## Social stresses

In moving far away from families and friends, international students can feel displaced. Those who are new India worry about how well they will adjust to Indian life. After a while, some students may wonder how they will be accepted at home with different dress, talk and behavior. In essence, they worry about being foreigners in their own countries.

## Recommendations

- Reach out to international students by asking about their research and outside interests
- If you are an international student, ask your peers, professors and mentors for the best way to interact — in person, email, phone, office hours or group meetings
- Refrain from stereotyping international students as having difficulties with English
- Help your peers and faculty mentors learn that international students who speak English very well can still experience cultural dissonance or confusion about Indian graduate education
- Most students have a single country visa that prohibits them from traveling freely outside the India. Also, they cannot work for pay. If you have questions about your program's requirements, speak with your graduate program coordinator or department chair. If you have questions about international student travel or work, contact the International Students Office.

## Mentoring Process

### Goals and work plans

Develop a work plan that includes short- and long-term goals within reasonable timelines. Talk with your mentor and with your graduate program coordinator to make sure these plans meet departmental requirements. At least once a quarter, update your mentor on your progress and obstacles you have encountered. Explore additional training and experience you need in order to achieve your goals. If you need to modify your timeline, work with your mentor to agree on a new work plan.

### Meetings

Discuss how often you and your mentor will meet and what other modes of communication can keep your conversations going (e.g., occasional emails). Request the amount of meeting time you need to make progress. If this person will have a heavy travel schedule while you are pursuing your degree, ask the mentor to suggest others you can consult during that time. Find out if the mentor is comfortable being contacted at home, and let him or her know if you can be called at home.

### Feedback

Clarify how often the mentor will give you feedback, including how long he or she typically needs to return papers or drafts of articles. Inquire about his or her current workload so you can plan your



deadlines appropriately, and offer sufficient lead time when handing in your work. Ask the mentor if he or she tends to provide lots of feedback or sparse feedback.

## Drafts

Discuss your mentor's expectations for drafts of your work before you submit them. Some professors do not want to review rough drafts. In that case, share drafts with a peer or writing group, and revise them before submitting them.

## Publishing and presenting

Find prospective mentor's philosophy on presenting or co-authoring papers. Be explicit about the kinds of publishing or presentation opportunities you seek.

## Intellectual property

If you are working closely with a mentor on a research project, clarify who owns the data that is being collected and whether others will be able to have access to it. Consideration for the ownership and sharing of research is important in all disciplines. Discuss the ownership of any copyright and patent agreements that might occur as a result of a project.

## Research and human subjects

The DSVV Human Subjects Division must review all research involving human subjects that is performed or supervised by DSVV faculty, staff or students. Students must seek Human Subjects review and approval before starting research activities. Research with human subjects cannot be retroactively reviewed and approved. Performing a human subject's study without prior review and approval is considered "serious" non-compliance according to Indian regulations and must be brought to Indian Council for Medical Research. More details can be found [here](#).

## Confidentiality

Be explicit about the confidentiality you want from your mentors, and offer strict confidentiality to your mentors. An exception to confidentiality is the obligation of all UW employees, including graduate assistants, to report instances of sexual harassment to organizational superiors.

## Recommendation letters

Before you approach the job search phase of your graduate experience, identify people who could write letters of recommendation on your behalf. Ask how much advance notice your mentors like for a recommendation letter. Be sure to provide key details about the fellowship, grant, program or job that the letter of recommendation supports. Attach an updated copy of your curriculum vitae. Ask one or more mentors to visit the classes you teach or labs you run so that they can reflect on your professional abilities.

## What to do if problems arise

Situations may arise that impact the timely completion of your work, such as the birth of a child or an illness. If this happens, discuss the issue with your mentors. As soon as possible, give them a new timeline for completing your degree.

Occasionally mentors face situations that can affect progress on your work. If significant delays happen often, talk with one or more of the following individuals.



## **The mentor or adviser**

Remind the person of your needs. If you are not getting satisfactory results, schedule a face-to-face meeting with the person as soon as possible to review what is happening and your goals.

## **Other mentors or supervisory committee members**

If other mentors on your team do not know the individual with whom you are experiencing difficulties, they will offer a fresh perspective and suggest solutions.

## **Peers**

Other students who have frequent contact with the individual in question can tell you if the issue is typical and may suggest solutions. Your peers can explain the norms in your department regarding frequency of meetings, turn-around time for feedback and availability of faculty.

## **Other Faculty**

Other faculty can advise you on dealing with challenges. If you want someone to intercede on your behalf, senior faculty may be in a better position to do so than junior faculty. You may feel more comfortable asking general questions about a situation, rather than being explicit about those involved.

## **Department Staff**

Graduate program coordinators and graduate program assistants can clarify departmental expectations and policies. They also can offer suggestions on how to resolve difficulties, and are familiar with the people and the offices on campus that can assist you.

## **Department HOD**

If you have tried to resolve issues with the faculty member directly, and other peers, faculty and staff have been unable to assist you, you might find it helpful to talk to your department HOD. Focus the discussion diplomatically and objectively on the assistance you need to meet your goals. Avoid making the discussion about personality or interpersonal style difficulties.

## **What a good mentor does**

### **Engages students in conversation**

- Welcomes students to talk often, and invites them to discussions during office hours, in the lab, department lounges or hallways
- Is in touch with students at least once a quarter
- Invites students to coffee or outings away from the office for informal discussions

### **Demystifies graduate school for students**

- Helps students interpret program guidelines and the Graduate School's policies and procedures
- Adjusts academic discussions to help students know what questions to ask or what certain terminology means
- Clarifies unwritten or vague aspects of program expectations for coursework, exams, research and teaching
- Helps students understand the finer points of forming a committee and how to approach a thesis or dissertation



- Helps students understand the criteria used to judge the quality of their work at different stages of graduate study
- Alerts students ahead of time to possible pitfalls, especially those that may affect their funding status

### **Provides constructive and supportive feedback**

- Provides students with frank, helpful and timely feedback on their work, and knows that delays in responding create insecurities that can hinder student progress
- Is equally specific when giving praise as when giving criticism. The mentor's high standards help mentees improve
- Does not assume a lack of commitment if a student falls behind in work and tries to assess, with the student, what is going on and offers help
- Knows the benefits of early intervention and addresses quickly any question about a student's ability to complete his or her degree

### **Provides encouragement**

- Encourages students to come forward with their ideas at all stages of development
- Motivates students to try new techniques and to expand their skills
- Reminds students those mistakes lead to better learning
- Shares less-than-successful professional experiences and the lessons learned from them
- Knows that many students experience anxiety about their place in graduate school and helps them understand that seasoned professionals also experience this kind of anxiety
- Teaches students how to break down potentially overwhelming projects into manageable tasks

### **Fosters networks and multiple mentors**

- Helps students locate assistance from multiple sources and sees faculty, graduate students, alumni, department staff, retired faculty and faculty from other universities as resources
- Introduces students to faculty and other graduate students in the department and at conferences
- Helps students connect their work with experts in the community who can provide career perspectives
- Builds a community of scholars by coordinating discussion groups or social events among students

### **Looks out for students' interests**

- Conveys that he or she wants students to succeed
- Creates opportunities for students to demonstrate their competencies by encouraging them to present at meetings, conferences and in university forums

### **Thinks about students' mentoring needs**

- Nominates students for high-visibility fellowships, projects, teaching and internship opportunities
- Promotes students' research and teaching projects inside and outside the department
- Is an advocate for all graduate students



## Treats students with respect

- Minimizes interruptions and distractions during meetings with students
- Tells students what he or she learns from them
- Acknowledges the prior skills and personal and professional experiences students bring to graduate school

## Provides a personal touch

- Is approachable and demonstrates caring, even when students need to discuss non-academic issues
- Does not assume that students experience challenges in the same way and assists them in finding creative solutions
- Keeps abreast of the mentoring and professional development resources at the Graduate School and elsewhere

## Development stages of the mentoring relationship

- Stage 1 - The mentee is more dependent
  - the mentor assists the mentee to accomplish specific activities related to their goals and provides modelling of skills, sharing of strategies and observational feedback.
  - discuss mutual goals
  - build trust and confidence
  - model and assist
  - acknowledge and appraise
  - explain and share strategies
- Stage 2 - The mentee grows increasingly independent
  - the mentee is becoming more self-directed in the development of skills but also needs consistent and frequent feedback.
  - directing the mentee to self-reflective practice will assist them to evaluate their own progress
  - observe
  - give and receive feedback
  - challenge and question
  - offer options
  - promote reflection
- Stage 3 - The mentee and mentor are interdependent
  - the mentee is increasingly less reliant on the mentor and can provide possible solutions to issues encountered
  - the mentor provides a sounding board to discuss concerns and offer support
  - take part in a two-way dialogue
  - plan collaboratively
  - decision making and problem solving
  - reflective practice, to promote thinking and consider alternatives



## How can I build an effective mentoring relationship?

**Structured professional dialogue** - Structured, constructive and meaningful conversations are at the heart of the mentoring process. This professional dialogue should draw on evidence from your mentee's practice and enable them to share their current beliefs and practices.

To help them to reflect you can ask:

- what is going well?
- how do you know?
- what could be improved?
- what will you do?
- what support will you need?
- what targets can we set?

**Developing trust** - Creating a trusting relationship and a secure environment is a key element to a successful mentoring relationship. Trust is essential for your mentee to feel able to talk to you freely and confidentially.

They will look to you to model a professional relationship, this includes:

- being punctual
- being reliable
- building trust
- maintaining confidentiality
- showing respect
- being sensitive to the learner
- appreciating the emotions associated with challenge

**Collaboration** - Mentor and mentee have shared responsibility for building effective collaboration between each other. Try to schedule regular catch-ups; these are more useful than longer, occasional meetings. Although you are their primary support and guide, remember that your mentee will also need to maintain effective relationships with other colleagues – you cannot be their sole support. You will both quickly recognize that through mentoring you will both be learning and improving your skills, knowledge and confidence.

Effective collaboration will help your mentee to:

- keep the momentum going
- maintain a commitment to personal learning
- ground new learning in everyday practice
- extend their skill level and encourage interests
- model good practice

**Encouraging self-direction** - As a mentor you will be looking to build on the strengths and capabilities of your mentee; however, ultimately it is your mentee who is responsible for their learning.

Guide your mentee so that they increasingly take responsibility for their self-development – encourage them to:

- improve and extend their skills
- develop new personal qualities



- increase their self-awareness

Setting goals within a context of self-evaluation - Helping your mentee to identify what they need to learn in order to improve is a key part of being a mentor.

Establishing personal and professional goals will:

- build upon what your mentee already knows, in order to improve their existing skills
- be challenging, so your mentee needs support in order to achieve them
- be the responsibility of your mentee • relate to the priorities of the school

**Experimenting and observing** - The best learning takes place when people are prepared to take a risk or face a challenge. It is important to encourage your mentee to innovate and take risks. You both should acknowledge and understand that sometimes there is no single correct answer or approach. Part of your role as mentor is to help your mentee to find approaches that work for them in their school and to find evidence in their practice and reflect on their new learning. Your mentee's activities for their portfolio do not have to be 'an unqualified success' – in fact trying something new that does not go exactly to plan but that sparks good reflection is more effective professional development than doing something known and safe.

As a mentor you will want to create a learning environment that:

- offers challenge
- supports risk taking
- permits failure as a learning experience
- encourages experimentation and trying out new things
- involves reflection before, in and on practice

**Sharing resources to protect and shelter professional learning** - Sharing your professional knowledge includes sharing and communicating about ideas, theories and practices that you have found useful and inspiring. Your mentee may also ask for help to find suitable resources and they will benefit from your guidance to ensure that resources are used effectively.

Resources include:

- time: effective time management is vital
- learning resources: encouraging access to professional learning materials
- practice resources: templates, lesson plans and formats you have found effective
- access to 'experts'
- building a network of contacts to encourage a learning dialogue



**Mentoring Agreement & Action Plan**

	Mentor	Mentee
Name		
Class & Course Details		
Location and Frequency of Meetings		
Signature		

Areas of Focus
Observation
Resources
Reflection
Others

	Minutes (key Understanding, Ideas, value addition, focus area, points of improvement, difficulties faced etc.)
<Date>	
<Date>	
<Date>	
<Date>	
<Date>	
<Date>	
<Date>	