



The Learning Support Centre
Dyslexia & Disability Specialists

Mentoring Handbook

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LSC and Jotters



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Non-Medical Help Charter



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Job Role

Overall Job Objective

To provide a complementary service to existing support within the University, college or workplace addressing the needs of clients who require support to overcome barriers in order to achieve their full potential.

Duties and Responsibilities:

- To work with clients on a 1:1 basis to develop their skills and help them overcome barriers to their learning development.
- To work with clients to draw up and implement time management plans and strategies to support their personal development.
- To have knowledge and appreciation of the range of activities, opportunities, organisations and individuals that could be drawn upon to provide extra support for clients.
- To guide clients in overcoming problems by signposting to other relevant services.
- To work closely with the line manager and to be responsible for the monitoring and evaluation of the impact Mentors have on client's achievements and progression.

This job description is not necessarily a comprehensive definition of the post and is subject to review following consultation.

The Learning Support Centre's aim is to provide a friendly and efficient service tailored to each individual's needs. The relationship is one of facilitating the client to achieve their full potential, by devising strategies to overcome any particular barriers they may face that impact on their academic studies. It is stressed that the mentoring is academic in nature and does not involve counselling. Counselling services are available elsewhere on campus and it may be the case that mentoring and counselling services are both utilised by the client.

The main strategies that may be used are: -

- Motivation and confidence building
- Time management
- Planning
- Organisation
- Target/goal setting
- Drawing up revision programmes
- Directing to other resources on campus/signposting
- Reassurance
- De briefing

Mentoring Guidelines

What is mentoring?

Specialist Mentors provide highly specialist, specifically tailored, one to one support to help students address the barriers to learning created by a particular impairment, e.g. mental-health conditions, or autistic spectrum disorders. This could include a range of issues, for example, coping with anxiety and stress situations, how to deal with concentration difficulties, time management, prioritising workloads and creating a suitable work-life balance. Specialist Mentors should not act as advocates or counsellors. Their role is to help students recognise the barriers to learning created by their impairment and support them in developing strategies to address these barriers, particularly at times of transition, e.g. when starting at university or when planning to move on from it. For some students this support will need to be ongoing while for others it might be gradually phased out or only be required at certain points of their course.

Guidelines

- 1) Entering a mentoring relationship is **voluntary**.
- 2) The relationship is one of partners who **jointly make decisions**.
- 3) Meetings should be held in a **quiet environment** where both parties feel they can speak freely without being overheard.
- 4) Both mentor and mentee must be happy with the location of meetings giving due regard to safety, security, and travel arrangements- any concerns should be raised with the office immediately.
- 5) **Meetings should be long enough** and paced so as to allow the two people to get to know and feel comfortable with each other.
- 6) Information shared in mentoring meetings is subject to standard rules of **professional confidence**. Any notes made about mentoring meetings should be kept in **confidence**. Exceptions are special circumstances where, professional mentors do break confidentiality. Mentors should be aware of these circumstances and rather than give blanket guarantees of confidentiality make clear the exceptions.

The exceptions are;

- The mentor believes a client is a risk to themselves or others (e.g. potential for suicide or unfit for duties such that this may contribute to an accident)
 - A legal requirement (e.g. when a crime has been committed or a person under sixteen may be at risk)
- 7) **Commitments made should be honoured**. Postponed meetings should be re-booked promptly.
 - 8) The mentor's role is to respond to the mentee's developmental needs. The **mentor must not impose their own agenda**. The mentor's role is to challenge and support the mentee. The relationship should be distinct from that of a superior and subordinate.
 - 9) The mentor should provide **constructive feedback** to the mentee, while the mentee should **attempt to tackle** any areas for development.

- 10) Both partners should take **equal responsibility for progression** of the mentoring partnership.
- 11) The mentor **should not act on behalf** of the mentee.
- 12) The mentor and mentee should be **open and truthful** with each other.
- 13) The mentor and mentee should **respect each other's time** and other responsibilities, ensuring that they do not impose beyond what is reasonable.
- 14) Either party has the right to ask for a **review** of how the mentoring is progressing or for agreements or plans made at an earlier stage to be reviewed.
- 15) Mentees should **not expect mentors to deal with long standing issues or major emotional events that are more properly the province of professional counsellors and psychotherapists.**
- 16) Mentors should **recognise their limitations** and avoid working with the mentee in ways that exceed those limitations.
- 17) Should a mentor sense there is a **conflict of interest** between the mentoring and any other role, the mentor should make this conflict known to the mentee as soon as is practicable.
- 18) Mentors **must not exploit** mentees in financial, sexual or other ways.
- 19) **Notice** to end the mentoring should allow for at least one meeting where a final review and proper closure can take place.

Please read this through with your clients on the first session as this is a useful way to outline the definition to them.

Mentoring is designed to be an effective partnership, it is not a reliant relationship, but is designed to develop the mentee's improved competence in self-management. The long term aim is that the mentee will be able to develop effective strategies independently of the mentor.

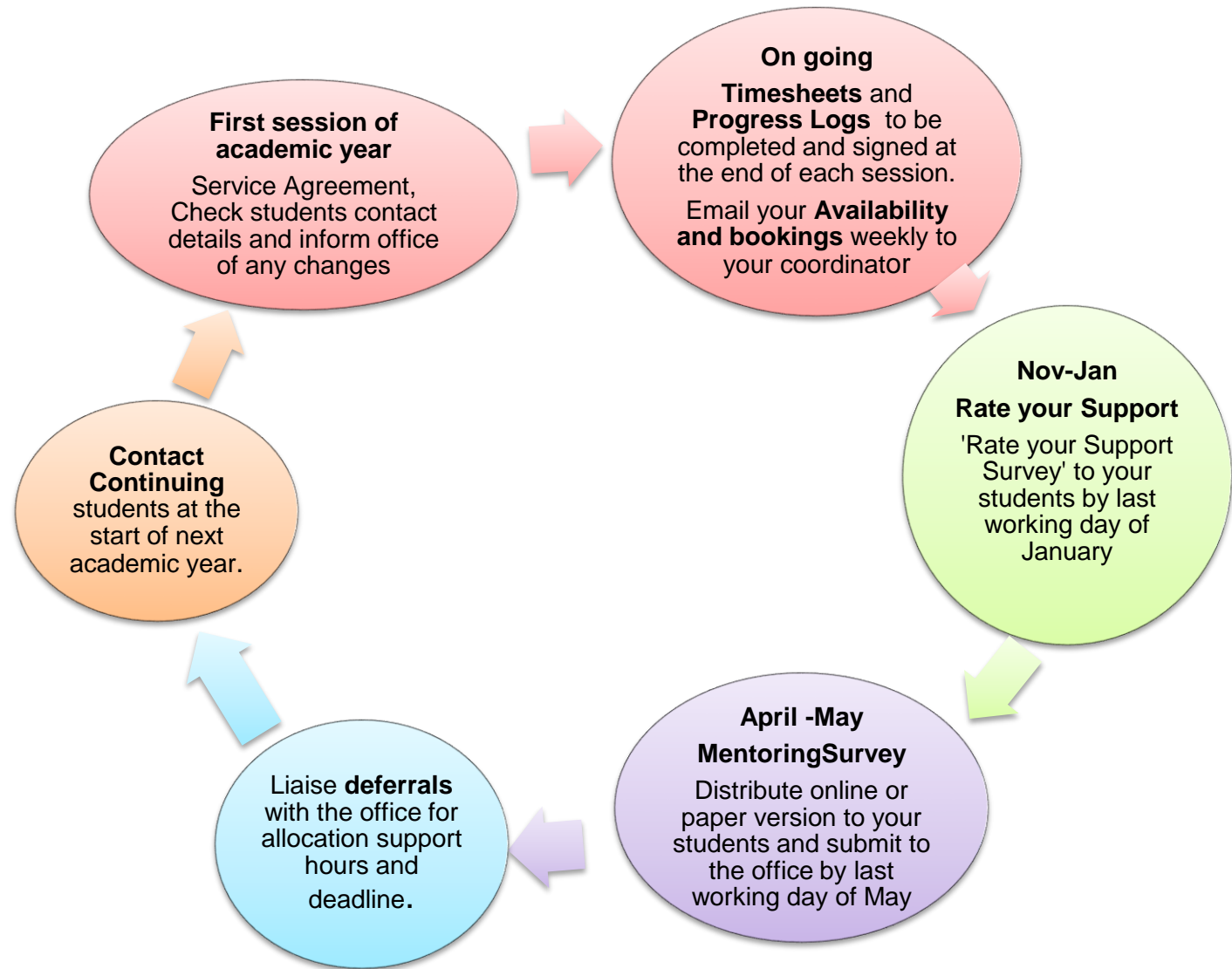
Mentoring Process of support

New Student Referral

- Email received with attached student referral information and support details.
- Mentor to contact student and arrange first session within 24hrs via phone & email.
- Mentoring support initial session guidance

Completed Students

- Submit ALL student paperwork (ILP's, Progress Logs to the office
- Discuss Access to work with Student.
- Inform office of students final grade



First session

Environment

Mentoring sessions should take place in a location that is comfortable, confidential, and takes into account any disability needs. Specialist Mentoring should not take place in a public space unless the Needs Assessment Report specifically recommends this. Please discuss location with your coordinator as they will be able to advise and support you with this.

Client Information

You will already have been provided with some information regarding the client on the referral form. The referral form provides basic information about the client and some background information regarding their current difficulties. It is a good idea to check with the client that this information is correct and to make them aware of the information you have been provided.

Initial Session

During the initial session it is important to take the client through the mentoring guidelines and service agreement. Clients may be unsure of the mentoring process so it is a good time to ask if there are any questions relating to this.

Service Agreement: The client will have been emailed a copy of the service agreement prior to your initial session however please revisit and explain your role and outline the nature of Mentoring support. It is important to encourage the client to attend regular meetings for best results, explain the cancellation and missed session policy and advised of how many hours they have been allocated.

It may be useful at this point to **differentiate mentoring from counselling and to reinforce boundaries**. Exploring the client's expectations of the mentoring process is important so that any misconceptions can be dealt with early on. Explore the clients current challenges along with any areas of strengths can often provide a good starting point and allow you to learn more about where the client is at present and where they would like to be.

Resources

There are various **resources** available to you which can be found on the Learning Support Centre Staff portal, you can access this via the Learning Support Centre website.

These resources can support you when structuring your sessions but it is important to be able to respond to individual needs on a session by session basis and use the tools that you feel relevant at that particular time. Each session may take on a different format for each person as the aim is to individually tailor the support in order that the client engages and finds it helpful.

Discussion areas

Topics that a client might want to discuss during sessions are;

Academic
Social

Work
Disability related

Good Practice Guidance

The aim of Specialist Mentoring is to provide the client with support to facilitate competence in self-management of a mental health difficulty or other chronic condition that impacts upon their work/studies. Mentoring sessions should be tailored to the individual and approaches and techniques used should be suitable for the individual and tailored to their needs. Supervision should be utilised to review clients progress and any barriers you may have encountered, the supervisor and supervisee can then explore these together. Although Mentoring should be tailored to the individual's specific needs below is a list of goals that we may work towards with our clients:

- Analysis and identification of learning needs (through discussion and other information e.g. AON)
- Encouraging the development of self-awareness
- Providing guidance
- Helping the mentee plan their work, for example agreeing targets and deadlines
- Facilitating opportunities for the mentee to try out, in confidence, a range of ideas and methods of working before making a final decision on their implementation
- Reflective questioning to help analyse the causes and barriers to learning and provide solutions
- Helping the mentee learn from mistakes and setbacks
- Challenging assumptions and acting as a sounding board
- Adopting an objective and impartial role
- Referring the mentee onto other sources of information
- Building confidence and motivation
- Dealing sensitively with personal beliefs, capabilities, aspirations and learning styles
- Creating an open and relaxed relationship to help build confidence and trust that will enhance the learning process
- Celebrating successes
- Try to set a regular time for meetings and make sure you are prepared for them.
- You don't always have to meet face-to-face to conduct your mentoring partnership. You can maintain contact by telephone or email (if appropriate) Please see guidance in Dropbox on remote support and discuss with a senior member of the team.
- Remember to encourage your mentee to give you feedback on any actions that they have taken as a result of your guidance.
- Mentoring should be mutually beneficial, so aim to establish a climate where a reciprocal exchange of ideas and information can occur.

Other client support

Although the mentoring we provide is academic in nature, often clients will be referred due to underlying mental health conditions possibly in conjunction with other specific learning differences like dyslexia, impacting on their ability to perform to their full potential. It may be that the client also has access to a **Study Skills Tutor** who will focus on strategies for producing written work, reading

techniques, research strategies, time management, note taking and proof reading strategies. However there will sometimes be an overlap in both the roles.

Paper work

The **service agreement** will be emailed to the client prior to you meeting with them along with a welcome pack. It may be useful to revisit the service agreement during your first session

You will need to ask your student to sign a timesheet at the end of each session and to complete the back to provide feedback on how the session has gone.

Boundaries

It is very important to understand that there are boundaries that must be adhered to when supporting your client. These guidelines are there to protect you and the client and also help to establish a professional format to sessions from the start.

What do you think we mean by boundaries and why are they important?

Boundaries define the limits of your professional relationship with clients and your ethical responsibilities concerning them.

- Your relationship with clients must be wholly professional, you must not befriend or socialise with clients.
- Do not add a client on Facebook or any social networking sites.
- You can only support your client on campus, this means you can go to any University building with your client e.g. Library, Eric Wood learning zone, Campus centre but you should not go to the pub!
- It is not your job to provide a counselling service for your clients.
- You must not provide personal assistance unless specifically authorised to do so by your manager.
- Be aware of your boundaries and maintain them at all times.
- Be vigilant as some people may attempt to push your boundaries.
- Don't give or accept gifts to/from clients, refer to company policies when explaining this to them.
- You are not allowed to visit their home/halls of residence or give or receive lifts in personal transport unless authorised to do so.
- Whilst on a night out you bump into a client you used to support. As the relationship is no longer a professional one then it is ok to spend some time with them if you choose to, however, please be mindful that you are still a representative of the company.
- If you are unsure of anything you should talk to your manager about it before you act.
- Please use your common sense when making decisions regarding boundaries.