



School of Psychology Alumni Mentoring Programme

Information for Students



Thanks for your interest in this programme!

I am delighted that you are interested in learning more about the Psychology Alumni Mentoring Programme.

Work Related Learning (which includes mentoring, mock interviews, employer panels and placements) is an important part of our School. It enhances your understanding of the world of work; yourself and your potential work environments. As a result, you are further empowered to enter and succeed in graduate job markets, the world of work and your wider lives.

The assistance of a Mentor will provide you with a safe space to think about your career paths, the skills you have and the skills you need.

We have several alumni mentors who have expressed an interest in mentoring and know that for you, there are various benefits including:

- The opportunity to learn from a role model
- A broader perspective
- Help in clarifying and setting development goals
- Increased self-awareness and confidence because of honest and constructive feedback
- An insight into professional roles
- Access to people outside your normal sphere of influence
- A safe environment to test out ideas and suggestions

We look forward to receiving your application for this mentoring programme.

Patricia Murphy
Alumni Mentoring Manager

Introduction

This document has been developed to provide you with information on the Psychology Alumni Mentoring Programme and provides some information to assist you in developing a successful mentoring relationship.

What is Mentoring?

“Mentoring involves listening with empathy, sharing experience (usually mutually), professional friendship, developing insight through reflection, being a sounding board, and encouraging”

David Clutterbuck

Mentoring is a powerful personal development and empowerment tool. It can help you gain a better understanding of yourself and what you can do as a career.

It should be driven primarily by you, the Mentee, with the Mentor supporting and enabling you to take responsibility for your own development. The Mentor acts as a guide, supporter, sounding board and as a role model.

The programme will help you develop skills and your confidence alongside your Psychology studies. We want you to be ‘work ready’ when you graduate, and we believe that you will benefit from building a network with our Psychology alumni.

The aims of the programme are:

- to help Psychology students engage with Alumni
- to provide students with a supported framework to think about the extensive career options open to them
- to help them understand the transferable skills they have, as well as the skills they need to develop.

This is very much personal development opposed to academic guidance or formal career advice.

What do we expect from you?

As a mentee you are expected to:

- Attend a briefing session about the Programme and your role.
- Meet your mentor at least 3 times during the programme. This can be via face to face and/or virtual meetings.
- Provide feedback to the mentor.
- Provide feedback to the School of Psychology about the programme and your experience.

What can I cover with my mentor?

Potential topics could include:

- Career development
- Presentations and public speaking
- Business start-up
- Building networks
- Recruitment and training
- Increasing career and business confidence
- Resilience
- Problem solving
- Someone to support me
- Organisation and planning
- Profile and visibility
- Interviews and pitches

Indicative Timeline

Step 1:	Mentors recruited throughout year
Step 2:	Applications open for students (October/November)
Step 3:	Mentoring Coordinator reviews and matches Mentees and Mentors
Step 4:	Mentees and Mentors receive an email introducing each other (Oct/Nov)
Step 5:	Induction session for Mentors and Mentees (November)
Step 6:	Mentoring sessions (Nov – March)
Step 7:	Feedback session and Celebration event – (March/April)

Frequency of meetings

The Mentors have been asked to meet with you a minimum of 3 times between November and March. These can take place with either virtually, via telephone or face-to-face.

Matching

Students will be accepted onto the programme based on their application responses, along with the availability of a Mentor that matches the student's interests and career goals.

All our mentors have been interviewed and will be able to provide you with a valuable developmental experience. You may not be placed with a mentor in your intended career field, so please only apply if you are flexible and willing to engage wholeheartedly in this valuable developmental opportunity.

There will be approximately 30 places available on the Alumni Mentoring Programme 2023/24. Once you receive confirmation that you have been successfully matched with a Mentor, it is up to you to contact your Mentor and arrange your first meeting.

The Agreement

It is recommended that the mentoring relationship is based on shared expectation about what each party can expect of the other.

The best way to ensure that the relationship runs smoothly is to discuss and agree some ground rules and expectations, which can help to keep the process focused. Whilst emphasizing that the important aspect to mentoring is the people and the relationship and not the process, it may be helpful to complete a Mentoring Agreement (see Appendix 1).

Be clear about the boundaries of the mentoring relationship, keep a professional distance, and remember mentoring does not deal with:

- Counselling
- Mental health
- Personal trauma
- Dependency etc

In these situations, please recognize the mentoring boundaries and contact our [Student Wellbeing Service](#) or our in-house Student Support Officer (Avril Hawthorne a.hawthorne@qub.ac.uk).

Getting started with Alumni Mentoring

1. Arrange meetings

You are responsible for contacting your Mentor and arranging an agreeable time/ date to meet.

2. Be prepared

You might feel nervous about meeting your Mentor for the first time, but don't be, as they are here to support and guide you. If you prepare a few questions that you can ask your Mentor in advance this will take the pressure off you.

- What has been your most rewarding accomplishment?
- How do you spend most of your time at work?
- Who else would you recommend I connect with?
- How can I get experience here?
- Is this where you thought you would end up?
- If you could do it all again, what would you do differently?
- What do you wish you knew at my stage?

We would also encourage you to complete the "Mentoring Goals" document (Appendix 2) prior to your first mentoring session and throughout the programme.

3. Mentoring Agreement

At your first meeting your Mentor will complete a Mentoring Agreement (see Appendix 1) with you. This will help you both agree what topics will be covered/ set objectives and agree frequency of meetings

4. Be honest

Be honest with yourself and your Mentor, about how the relationship is going – does the focus need to change?

Participation is voluntary for both Mentors and Mentees. If you decide not to continue, there will be no negative repercussions. However, we would ask that you notify us (patricia.murphy@qub.ac.uk).

5. Listen to feedback

Listen to what your Mentor says. Ask questions, although you don't have to agree with the answers.

6. Safety

You should always meet you Mentor in a professional setting or in public.

7. Keep in contact

Keep us up to date. Let us know how you are getting on and if you have any issues.

The Do's and Don'ts of mentoring

Do's	Don'ts
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Take responsibility for setting up each of the sessions• Ensure the mentor and you are clear about the nature and parameters of the relationship• Agree realistic expectations• Listen• Ask appropriate questions• Keep a reflective journal of what you have learned through mentoring (see appendix 3)• Build flexibility into the organisation and structure of meetings• Create a friendly atmosphere• Be honest and patient• Summarise what you have learned at University / work and in your mentoring sessions• Consider opportunities for development both personally and professionally• Consider other source of support (e.g. https://www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/sgc/careers/)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Interrupt your mentor, unless it is to clarify your understanding of an important point• Spend most of the time talking about your own experiences• Forget that frequent communication is key to successful mentoring

Frequently Asked Questions

How was my mentee/mentor matched to me?

Basic information from the application form is gathered, with mentee to mentor matched based on the information provided.

How much of my time will this take?

This very much depends on each pairing. It is entirely both parties' choice as to how frequently you meet and for how often. We recommended that this is discussed, and some guidelines are set out at the first meeting. However, as a rough guide, we would like you to meet at least 3 times during the programme.

When does the programme start and end?

You will be notified in November who you have been matched with, ideally your first meeting should be held within two – four weeks of being matched. The programme will run to March.

What happens if we do not get on?

There is a chance that some of the suggested matches will not work in practice, and this will probably be apparent quite quickly.

It is worth bearing in mind that a mentoring relationship is designed to challenge you and make you think differently about yourself and your approach to things. As a result, there could well be points during your meetings where you feel moved outside your comfort zone. In retrospect, this could well be when you gain the most from the scheme. However, if there is a more permanent and fundamental 'mis-match' please let us know.

How confidential is all this?

What you discuss with your mentor/mentee is strictly confidential between the two of you, and you must maintain this confidentiality even after your relationship has ended. You will never be asked for details of what you discuss at your meetings.

It is 4 weeks in, and I've heard nothing from my mentor, what should I do?

Usually, the mentees take responsibility for making the first contact with their mentor and arranging a meeting. If you have made initial contact but then hear nothing, please let us know.

How should we keep in touch?

We recommend that you discuss with your mentor on how best to stay in touch between sessions. Everyone has a preferred communication method and frequency, so let them know if you'd like updates via email, telephone calls etc.

I want to withdraw from the programme.

This is a voluntary programme, so we will not force you to continue a mentoring relationship if it is not working. All we ask is that you let us know why you want to withdraw. Mentoring relationships aren't easy, you may be pushed beyond your 'comfort zone', but often this can lead to real insights and gains being made.

Will there be an evaluation of the programme?

Yes, we will ask you to complete an evaluation at the end of the programme

Contact us:

To learn more about how to get involved in our Psychology Alumni Mentoring Programme please contact:



Patricia Murphy
Psychology Alumni Mentoring Manager
patricia.murphy@qub.ac.uk

Appendix 1:

Psychology Alumni Mentoring Programme

SAMPLE - The Mentoring Agreement

It is recommended that the mentoring relationship is based on shared expectation about what each can expect of the other. The best way to ensure that the relationship runs smoothly is to discuss and agree some ground rules and expectations, which can help to keep the process focused. Whilst emphasizing that the important aspect to mentoring is the people and the relationship and not the process, it may be helpful to complete a Mentoring Agreement

Responsibilities/ commitment	We are both committed to achieving a productive, confidential, and honest relationship which fosters learning and professional development for both of us
Meeting logistics where, when, how often, length etc	
Contact between meetings	
Boundaries of confidentiality	
Mentee Learning objectives	
Mentor Learning objectives	
Success criteria	
Mentee signature:	Date:
Mentor signature:	Date:

Appendix 2: SAMPLE - My mentoring goals

Name:

Mentor Name:

Date:

Identify 3 goals you want help with achieving through mentoring	On a scale 0 – 10 (0 being the lowest), how do you rate yourself now (before your first meeting)?	What do I need to do to achieve this goal (Complete this with your Mentor)
1.		
2.		
3.		

Appendix 3: SAMPLE - Reflective journal

Name:

Mentor name:

Date:

What topics did we cover today?	
What have I learnt about myself?	
Where can I go for additional support (if required)?	
What do I need to do before my next mentoring session?	
What do I need to do within the next 6-12 months?	
Date & time for next coaching session:	
What did I forget to cover in this session? What would I like to ask at the next session?	