

Scenario Ideas and Possible Actions

What would you do?

Every mentoring relationship hits a few bumps along the way. These scenarios are based on things that might happen to you, and the purpose is to help you navigate them when needed.

Scenario 1: “I haven’t heard from my mentor in weeks”

What would you do? Think it through, then check your answer against these:

- ☐ Send a short, polite follow-up email with a specific meeting request; a date and time, not just “when you’re free”
- ☐ Check whether they might be on leave or in a particularly busy period (teaching weeks, marking, research trips)
- ☐ Suggest two or three specific slots that work for you, to make it easy to say yes
- ☐ Still no response after 2 to 3 attempts? Contact your Programme Manager (or Departmental Tutor, where your department has one) as they can guide and support you too

Scenario 2: “I don’t know what to ask in our meetings”

What would you do? A blank mind before a meeting is normal. Try preparing around these:

- ☐ Review your academic progress and flag anything you’re finding difficult
- ☐ Think about your career goals and what you might need help figuring out next
- ☐ Ask about course choices or research opportunities
- ☐ Ask your mentor about their own academic journey – most are happy to talk about it, and it often opens the conversation up
- ☐ Bring up time management or study strategies if that’s where you’re stuck
- ☐ Check the [Academic Mentoring Hub](https://info.lse.ac.uk/staff/divisions/Academic-Mentoring-Hub) for prompts if you’re still stuck for questions

Scenario 3: “My mentor seems too busy to help”

What would you do?

- ☐ Be realistic about their workload, but don’t let that stop you asking for what you need
- ☐ Suggest a brief, focused meeting. Sometimes 10 to 15 minutes is enough for a lot of questions
- ☐ Come prepared: specific questions, on time, ready to go
- ☐ Offer flexible formats, a quick email or short call can work as well as a meeting
- ☐ Still not working? Your Departmental Senior Student Advisor, Departmental Tutor, or Programme Manager can help. That’s what extra support is for

Scenario 4: “I’m not sure what my mentor’s role actually is”

What would you do?

- ☐ Just ask them directly what they see their role as, and what you can expect from them
- ☐ Talk about boundaries: what they can help with, and what’s outside their remit
- ☐ Remember their main job is to guide you and point you toward the right support, not to solve everything themselves
- ☐ Have a look at the [Academic Mentoring Hub](https://info.lse.ac.uk/staff/divisions/Academic-Mentoring-Hub) – there are guides for both UG and PG mentees, and for mentors, which can help set expectations on both sides