

Education Career Track Mentoring Guidance 2019-2020

Introduction

The following Education Career staff should be assigned a mentor by their Head of Department (HOD) **during their probation period:**

- Assistant Professorial Lecturers
- Associate Professorial Lecturers
- Professorial Lecturers

The purpose of a Mentor is to give **informal** and frequent advice and provide a sounding board throughout the year. This is different to the annual Career Development Review (CDR) meetings which are normally conducted by the HOD or their nominee. Importantly, the mentor cannot be the one holding the CDR meeting and should also not be the person undertaking Probationary Review Meetings (where this is different).

The mentor will normally be a member of academic staff with a similar background within the staff member's Department. The mentor may also be from a related Department.

Frequency of meetings

During the probation period, meetings should normally be taking place at least once per term. However, given the informal nature of mentoring it is expected that the majority of the mentoring may well take place outside of specifically scheduled meetings.

The Substance of the Mentoring Relationship

The role of the mentor is three-fold:

- to assist the mentee in developing a good understanding of the expectations of the Department and the School;
- to provide a listening ear and informal guidance
- to act as an advocate for the mentee (e.g. if their workload allocation appears over-extended, or if they face difficulties with colleagues).

When the mentor is providing a listening ear/acting as advocate, possible issues that **may** arise could include:

- Teaching contribution, teaching quality and teaching innovation (be that curricular or teaching process innovation), and feedback from teaching surveys.
- Teaching administrative arrangements and contributions.
- Achieving appropriate balance between the different elements of the role.
- Teaching quality and teaching innovation (be that curricular or teaching process innovation), and feedback from teaching surveys.
- Challenges from teaching.
- Upset arising from and ideas on constructive response to challenging feedback from colleagues.
- Managing administrative load.

- Potential for contribution to the School's external activities (e.g. Enterprise LSE, Summer School, international institutional links).
- Wider contribution to the life of the School, collegiality and citizenship.
- Training and development needs.
- Work/life balance.

To some extent, the mentor relationship has similarities to coaching. It is important that the relationship is kept professional. It is also important for both parties to ensure that they do not over-reach reasonable bounds in terms of professional expertise and for the mentor where necessary to seek guidance/advice from others (e.g. if concerned about the Mentee's health/well-being).

In some cases, it may be appropriate for the mentor to advise the mentee to discuss detailed matters with other colleagues in the department/centre and/or to contact colleagues elsewhere in the School (e.g. Teaching and Learning Centre (TLC), Research Division or the Careers Service). Note that all departments have a HR Partner from whom staff can seek advice should it be necessary (e.g. for guidance related to disability, flexible working, caring responsibilities), and that many academic staff are members of the Universities and Colleges Union (UCU). There is also a staff counselling service available at the School. TLC can also assist both/either mentor/mentee as appropriate (email: tlc@lse.ac.uk).

The School offers support for new and existing mentors, such as mentoring development sessions. Further information is available [here](#).

The mentor should feel able to offer criticism and advice which the mentee, whilst encouraged to listen carefully, is not obliged to take.

Some helpful tips

The School has also developed some helpful tips for mentors and mentees – available [here](#).

Additional Links:

[CDR guidance and form](#)
[Additional support for mentors/mentees – some helpful tips.](#)