



Information for mentees and mentors

What is mentoring?

One-to-one mentoring should be a positive developmental relationship, which is driven primarily by the mentee and through which the **mentee** can take responsibility for their own development.

The **mentor** should act as a guide, supporter, sounding board, and role model. This form of mentoring creates a confidential partnership between two people, one normally more experienced and senior than the other, based on understanding and trust.

The aim of one-to-one mentoring is to build knowledge, capability and self-reliance in the mentee although it is often a two-way learning relationship which provides useful feedback and reflection opportunities for both mentee and mentor.

What are the benefits of mentoring for the mentee?

- Development for career progression and decision-making
- Developing inter-personal and professional skills
- Gaining a better understanding of systems relevant to their career
- Increased self-confidence
- Strategies for managing a difficult working relationship or situation
- Balancing work and career opportunities
- Increased personal reflection

What is the role of the Mentee?

The role of the mentee is to be proactive and drive the mentoring relationship. Mentees should aim to maximise their learning and to make the most of the support offered by their mentor. A mentee will get to know their mentor well, and through the course of several discussions, should be able to identify the mentor's strengths, expert knowledge and skills.

What is the role of the Mentor?

The role of the mentor is to help their mentee find their own solutions to issues and challenges which the mentee wishes to address. There should be a commitment from the mentor to meet online at least twice per year and the mentor should encourage the mentee to take a leading role in driving the relationship by arranging the meetings and planning the topics to be discussed. It is useful for mentors as well as mentees to have clear objectives for each meeting.

Skilled mentors will play a range of different roles within a mentoring relationship, adjusting their approach to maximise their usefulness to the mentee. We hope to help mentors to develop these skills through the recorded webinar on the MRC Clinical Trials Unit at UCL Hub and by providing access to a range of mentoring resources.

A mentor may offer advice, and give guidance based on personal knowledge and experience. They will also ask questions which may challenge the mentee to consider what mentees can do to work towards their goals. The mentor should not tell the mentee how to address issues. An important attribute of a



mentor is the ability to support the mentee in identifying the most appropriate source of support required by the mentee, if the right support cannot be provided by this mentoring relationship.

Expectations of Mentees	Potential expectations of a Mentor
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Set clear and SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, time-bound) objectives for the relationship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Assist with setting realistic career goals
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Be proactive in setting the agenda for meetings, and actively following up on any agreed actions afterwards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Support the mentee with what they want to explore
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Keep commitments made e.g. attend meetings or respond to emails 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Keep commitments made e.g. attend meetings or respond to emails
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Prepare for the mentoring meetings to make the most of the time available 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Share experiences and examples from their own career/life
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Seek the mentor’s advice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Suggest opportunities to practice or develop particular skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Listen carefully 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Give advice and feedback. Examples could include job applications, interview practice or improving the mentee’s CV
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Respond to (and act on) constructive feedback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Listen with an open mind and talk openly and honestly with their mentee
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Respect confidentiality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Be prepared to challenge and be challenged
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Remain open to new ideas and receptive to the mentor’s suggestions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Respect confidentiality
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Approachable and empathetic
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Signpost to useful contacts, resources, network

What about confidentiality?

It is important that in a mentoring partnership, both parties feel able to talk honestly and openly, safe in the knowledge that what is discussed will not be repeated without agreement. Complete trust in your mentoring partnership may take time to emerge but can be helped by having a conversation at the start where what both parties understand by “confidentiality” is discussed. For example:

- What we discuss stays confidential
- Any dialogue that takes place by email is only seen by the partners.
- It is OK to give general feedback to the scheme coordinators.
- If either party needs to refer an issue raised back to a third party, they will do so with the other’s permission.

Getting Started - What happens in a first meeting?

It is recommended that the mentee/mentor start with a 30-minute *getting-to-know-you* session where they can share information about their backgrounds, careers, ambitions, their interests in mentoring and objectives (refer to “*What to discuss in first mentoring meeting*” doc). This enables the mentee and mentor to establish if they are compatible and either may decide after the first meeting if they do not wish to continue the relationship further.



“Mentoring Agreement”

If the mentee and mentor decide to continue their relationship, then it is a good idea to agree how they intend to work together. This will help to provide focus for the meetings. The “*LMIC Mentoring Agreement Form*” should be completed to record the scope and method of mentoring agreed. This will help to encourage the mentee to reflect on what kind of support they want from the mentor and help the mentor understand what kind of roles and topics will be most useful by way of support. This agreement can be reviewed and revised over time.

On the LMIC Mentoring Agreement Form you can populate your agreement together within the following categories as appropriate:

- Confidentiality
- Frequency, timing and duration of meetings
- Communication
- Feedback to one-another
- Reviewing the relationship
- Specific short term and long-term objectives for the relationship
- Tracking progress: establish a clear method of tracking objectives
- Mentoring dimensions / boundaries including any potential conflicts of interest e.g. job applications, line management relationships

Subsequent meetings

The timetable for further meetings will be agreed between yourselves. Content will, of course, be determined by the mentee’s own specific objectives. A list of topics that could be discussed include:

- Career aspirations and next steps
- Different career directions and opportunities available
- Preparing for promotion or job applications
- Managing work relationships or situations
- Inter-personal and professional skills
- Work life balance
- Motivation, self-confidence
- Team working and leadership

What happens if things go wrong?

Taking early action is always best. Typical issues may be the mentee/mentor repeatedly cancelling appointments, personal differences, or breaking confidences. Some of these issues may be solved by mentees and mentors talking openly to each other to address the issues. If this discussion does not lead to a resolution, mentees and mentors can agree to terminate their mentoring relationship. Both parties should give feedback to the LMIC Mentoring team regarding the issues experienced so that processes may be adjusted as required.
