

Guide for Mentees

<https://www.hw.ac.uk/students/careers-service>

What is a Career Mentor?

A Career Mentor is an experienced and trusted advisor who will encourage and support you to make informed choices and support you in achieving your professional goals.

Although final decisions are always in your hands, a mentor can be invaluable in guiding you to identify the support you need, consider your options and get new information.

Our Career Mentors are professionals from different sectors and professions based in the UAE and abroad who volunteer to support students by providing invaluable insight, advice and guidance into their chosen career via email, WhatsApp and meeting in person or online.

Mentoring is just one type of careers support. Careers information, advice and guidance are available through

the Careers Consultants at Heriot-Watt University. You can also attend numerous skills seminars and employer events organised by the Careers Service.

For more information go to:

<https://heriot-watt.targetjobs.co.uk/workWithStudent/appointments.html?execution=e2s1>



"I think that this programme is really beneficial, and I would recommend all students to take part if they can."

Benefits of having a Career Mentor

You can gain a lot by putting time and effort into building your relationship with your Career Mentor. Career Mentoring can give you the opportunity to:

- Receive individual recognition, encouragement and support
- Increase your self-esteem and confidence when dealing with professionals
- Network and create a lasting professional network
- Find out more about your options and alternatives
- Find out more about the process of navigating your career
- Learn about different perspectives and experiences
- Get a realistic perspective on the workplace
- Get advice on how to balance work and other responsibilities and priorities



“Using one of their contacts, my mentor arranged for me to get some interview tips for a job I was applying to for another company.”

Ways in which a Career Mentor can help

- Provide you with the benefit of their own experience in a particular profession or employment area
- Listen to and discuss your career plans and ideas
- Give you friendly support and guidance
- Provide honest and constructive feedback
- Help with your decision-making by suggesting alternatives based on personal experience
- Help increase your professional knowledge and how your academic knowledge and theory is applied in the workplace

“He also offered to read my dissertation for me.”

BUT don't expect your Career Mentor to:

- Arrange a work placement or job for you
- Do your course work or research for you
- Sort out all your problems
- Tell you what to do
- Arrange and plan all the meetings

Building an effective relationship

Since your mentoring relationship exists mainly for your growth and success, it makes sense for you to monitor the relationship and ensure it is as good as it can be. Research has shown that effective relationships have similar factors upon which they are built. These include:

- Mutual respect
- Acceptance and flexibility
- Honesty and direct communication
- Preparation
- Commitment
- Some shared values
- Trust
- Willingness to work through obstacles



"I usually email my mentor if I have a query or any news, which works quite well."



"The mentoring programme has gone really well for me. We have met once or twice and communicate by email quite frequently."

Making the first contact

Your Mentor is waiting to hear from you. Please don't put off getting in touch. Email is a good way to make your first contact.

- Include a brief introduction of yourself and what you are studying as well as something positive about the opportunity to meet and build a relationship with your new Career Mentor.
- Tell your Career Mentor that you would like to arrange a meeting and ask them to suggest how you can arrange this and when it might be convenient.
- Make sure you use a professional tone throughout.
- If you don't hear back from your Career Mentor within a few days, send another polite message. If you've tried to make contact on more than one occasion and heard nothing back, then please contact the Mentoring Coordinator straight away at **r.kassem@hw.ac.uk**

It's a good idea to think about:

- What you hope to get from the relationship
- What you have to offer
- Questions for your career mentor
- Your background (how did you reach where you are now?)
- Your goals

The first meeting with your Career Mentor

You might feel a bit nervous about your first meeting but don't worry about it – a lot of people do. You might be thinking, 'How will we start?' or 'What are we going to talk about?' It's a good idea to devote some thought to your first meeting because it's extremely important. If you get off to a good start, everything else should be much easier.

What is the first meeting for?

- The first meeting is all about getting your relationship off to a good start by establishing some ground rules and acknowledging that the relationship is two-way. This is also the best time to agree about what you hope to achieve and share your expectations with one another.
- Be professional but relax and enjoy the relationship. Don't let it be a one-way street and ask your mentor questions about the lessons learned in his or her career.
- Be positive and share your vision with your career mentor.



"I was extremely proactive and contacted him straight away. We communicate regularly and I update him on my progress whenever there is something new on the scene."

General guidelines for working with your Career Mentor

It's important to establish guidelines for how the mentoring relationship will work. Doing this up front can help avoid needing to resolve differences later. Both you and your mentor should give some thought to the guidelines you'd like to establish, have an open discussion about them, and come to an agreement. You could consider:

- How often will you meet, and for how long each time?
- How you will communicate between meetings?
- Where will you meet?
- What will you do if a meeting must be cancelled or rescheduled?
- How will sensitive information be dealt with?



"I would recommend keeping in contact with your mentor on a regular basis. Sometimes if we haven't spoken for two weeks, I just drop him a line... 'Hey how are you hope you are well. No news to update you on but just checking in."

It's a good idea to keep a record of meetings as a reminder of your discussions and any action agreed. An example of a Mentoring Record sheet is available at the end of this booklet, or you can always follow up the meeting with an email.

Mentoring meeting record sheet example

MENTEE NAME:		MEETING DATE:	
MENTOR NAME:		SESSION NUMBER:	
SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION:	ACTIONS TO BE COMPLETED FOR NEXT SESSION:		ISSUES TO BE RAISED WITH MENTORING COORDINATOR OR CAREERS CONSULTANT:
	MENTOR	MENTEE	
DATE OF NEXT MEETING:		MENTEE INITIALS:	
LOCATION:		MENTOR INITIALS:	

Frequently asked questions

I am a little apprehensive about making the first contact, what advice can you give me?

You may feel a little nervous about approaching your Mentor but we encourage you to make the initial contact as this will develop your experience and confidence in handling this type of situation.



“A fantastic opportunity to speak to someone who has studied the same course and has gone on to pursue a career in [my] desired field.”

What should I do if I have any questions or problems either during the application process or once I am matched with a Mentor?

Please contact the Mentoring Coordinator at r.kassem@hw.ac.uk as soon as any problems arise so that we can try to answer your questions or try to sort things out.

Can we continue this relationship after the end of the academic year?

Of course you can - there is nothing to stop you from maintaining the professional relationship with your Mentor as long as both parties are happy to do so. This would also be fulfilling one of the aims of this programme – to widen the network of contacts both Mentor and the Mentee.



“My mentor mapped out several clear options that I have, and thanks to them I feel much more prepared for starting work. ”

Career Mentoring Programme