

# **TRAINING MANUAL FOR PEER MENTORS**

**PEER MENTORING IN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS**

*(Adapted from Middlesex University's Peer Mentoring Programme and M&BF UK)*



# Who is your mentor?

Write down all of the people you can think of throughout your life who may have been an unofficial mentor for you. Think back to what it was that they did, or how they helped you.

Who?	Why?

*Can you start to see how mentoring can happen unofficially in a lot of different situations and contexts?*

# What is a Mentor?

Have a look at all of these descriptions below and put a tick next to the ones which you think are mentors.

A Counsellor	An Advocate
A Friend	A Friendly Ear
Someone who remains independent about your problems	An Advisor
A Role Model	A Sympathetic Listener
A Teacher	A Helper

# Mentoring or Friendship?

Have a look at these qualities and tick which you think exist in mentoring, and which exist in friendship.

Quality	Mentoring	Friendship
Confidentiality		
Respect		
Love		
Genuineness		
Opinions		
Advice		
Support		
Encouragement		
Motivation		
Understanding		
Time Constraints		
Accountability		
Clear Boundaries		
Always there when needed		
Empathy		
Sympathy		
Trust		
Warmth		

You probably found this difficult, and realised that some qualities exist in both, although it is the ones that only exist in mentoring which help us to define the differences and the boundaries.

# Helping Skills Inventory

You will now have a better idea about what skills are required to be an effective mentor.

Have a look at the list below and think about which skills you would like to improve on over the training.

Don't worry if you think you don't have any of these yet, these will all be covered by the training, and you will learn a lot about yourself and what you can offer as a mentor.

	Good	OK	Need To Improve
Listening to others			
Keeping boundaries			
Keeping confidences when I am able			
Building an atmosphere of trust and openness			
Asking open questions			
Asking closed questions			
Being reliable			
Not judging people			
Approachable and friendly			
Not getting over involved			
Able to find the right person to help			
Able to understand other persons point of view (even if you don't agree with it)			

What other qualities or experience have you got which you think would also be useful?

# Differences

- Your trainer will direct the whole group to walk around in a circle, all going clockwise
- Your trainer will give you some statements
- If you agree with what the trainer has said carry on walking in the same direction
- If you disagree with what the trainer has said turn around and walk in the other direction (anti-clockwise)

How did it feel to be going the opposite way to everyone else?

Did you feel more comfortable when you were going the same way?

Do you think there was anything wrong with thinking and acting differently to the others?

Can you see how we can make others feel when we think they are different?

**Your Values**

What do you value highly? A value of something is the:

- worth
- usefulness
- importance
- significance

that **you** put on it.

Look at the list below. Number the five that you value most from 1-5, with 1 being the most valued and 5 being the least. Remember there is no 'right' or 'wrong' answer; your answer should reflect how you see them.

Friends	
World peace	
Culture	
Religion	
Health	
Environmental preservation	
Family	
Human rights	
Education	
Money	

# Assumptions

Look at the picture on projector screen, or choose another person in the group to work with and guess the following without talking to them



<b>Favourite food</b>	
<b>Favourite music group</b>	
<b>Favourite clothes shop</b>	
<b>Favourite magazine or book</b>	
<b>Favourite hobby</b>	
<b>Favourite TV programme</b>	
<b>Favourite sport</b>	
<b>Favourite holiday destination</b>	
<b>What do they do at weekends</b>	
<b>Favourite soap opera</b>	
<b>Favourite topic at university</b>	

## **YES/NO Game**

### **Some suggested questions for the YES/NO game:**

Do you like Plazma chocolate drink?

Do you like watching TV?

Do you enjoy University?

Do you think this peer mentoring course is good?

Is your name.....?

Have you got a brother?

Have you got a sister?

Do you like the colour red?

Have you got a best friend?

Do you think it is cold today?

Are you looking forward to the weekend?

Have you got an Ipad?

Have you got a pet?

## Questioning Styles

Here are some examples of questioning styles you may find useful when working with mentees.

*Tip. When you review how you are getting along with your mentee you may want to refer back to this and try other questioning styles, e.g.*

- *If you think you are still doing most of the talking, try consciously to ask open questions which encourage the mentee to talk, and leaves you to show your good listening skills.*
- *If you would like to encourage your mentee to try a different way of dealing with situations, use hypothetical situations and questions. If they have practised a situation with you, ask them to try it out and let you know next time you meet how it went.*

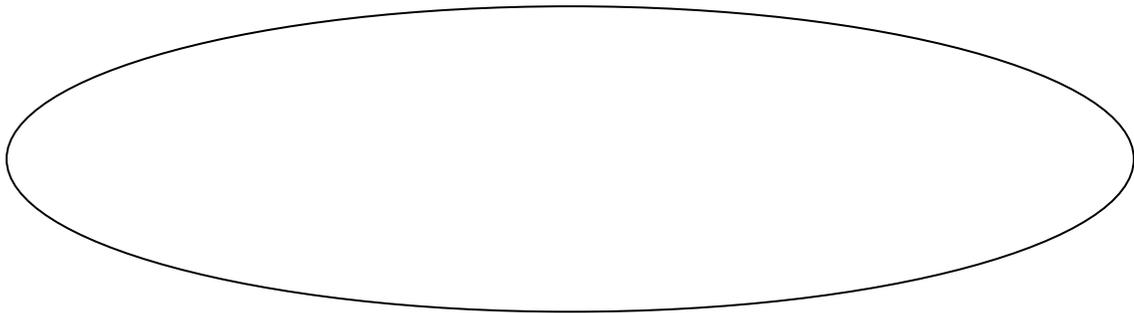
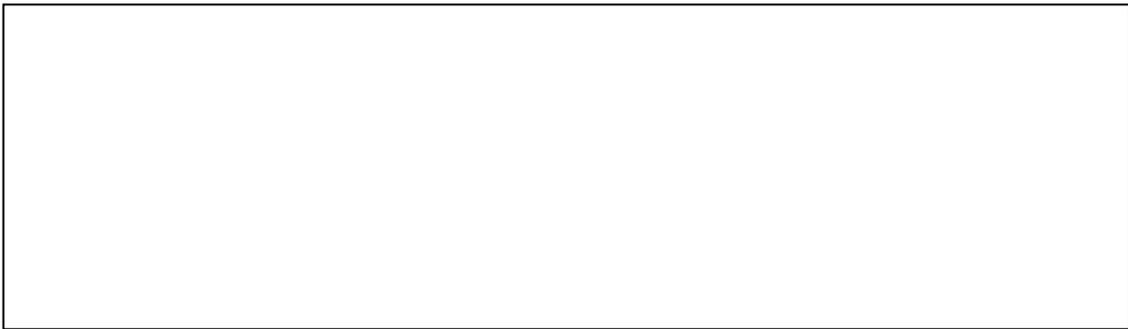
Type of Question	Example	Purpose
<b>Open</b>	'How's everything going?' 'What happened at University today?' 'How did you get on with your Economics lecture today?' 'Is everything OK?' 'Is there anything especially you want to talk about today?'	To help get the conversation started.  To allow the mentee to respond according to their agenda (although they are probably not aware they have one).  Encourages mentees to talk.
<b>Probe</b>	'Are you sure everything is OK?' 'What happened about that girl you were telling me about?' 'What skills do you think you learnt while you were doing the task?' 'Where exactly do you live?'	Slightly more pressure on finding out the facts and problems.  Helps you steer the conversation to certain issues. (Be careful not to sound like you are interrogating them)
<b>Closed</b>	'Do you have a best friend?' 'Do you want to try to learn about databases next week?'	Will often only illicit Yes or No answers.  Good for when you need to know facts quickly

	<p>'Do you get on with your new tutor?'</p>	<p>(Closed questions should not be used too often due to the habit forming nature of Yes/No responses.)</p>
<p><b>Hypothetical</b></p>	<p>'What would have happened if...?'</p> <p>'What would you do if...?'</p> <p>'How do you think so and so would react if you....?'</p> <p>'Given the choice what would you do if...?'</p>	<p>An excellent way to get mentees to think about other ways of dealing with things</p> <p>This type of can help mentees think about other ways of thinking/acting for the future. It gives them a chance to try out a situation in a safe environment and to plan for different outcomes.</p>
<p><b>Reflective</b> and summary</p>	<p>'This weeks sounds a lot better than last'</p> <p>'So you don't like it when people laugh at you?'</p> <p>'It sounds as though you think everyone thinks you are stupid?'</p>	<p>By repeating what they have been talking about you are showing that you are listening and understanding what they are trying to tell you.</p> <p>It allows the mentor to clarify what the mentee is trying to say. Repeating back in the student's own language is good for the student; they feel more accepted and understood.</p> <p>Gives the opportunity for the mentee to further talk about an issue.</p> <p>Can be good for giving feedback on progress.</p>

# Questioning Styles

## Exercise 1

Your trainer will read out three examples of questions/statements.  
Write these in the boxes below and decide which style you think they  
are i.e. hypothetical, open, probing etc.



# Questioning Styles

## Exercise 2

Look at the boxes below and think of a question for each style.

**OPEN**

**CLOSED**

**HYPOTHETICAL**

**PROBING**

**REFLECTIVE**



# 10 Commandments of Listening

- ❖ **Stop talking** – Nature gave you two ears but only one mouth, so take the hint!
- ❖ **Prepare yourself to listen** – Questions prepared in advance, when possible, free your mind for listening.
- ❖ **Put the talker at ease** – Smile and show positive body language.
- ❖ **Remove distractions** – Focus your mind on what is being said, don't doodle, tap, shuffle papers etc.
- ❖ **Empathize** – Try to see, and meet half way, the mentee's point of view even if it is not one you share.
- ❖ **Be patient** – A pause, even a long pause, doesn't always mean that the speaker has finished.
- ❖ **Avoid personal prejudice** – Don't allow irritation at things said, or the person's manner, to distract you.
- ❖ **Listen to the tone** – Volume and tone both show the person's reaction to what you have said.
- ❖ **Listen for the message – not just words** – You want to get the whole picture, not just bits and pieces.
- ❖ **Watch for non-verbal signals** – Gestures, facial expressions, and eye movement can all be important if you are talking with someone face to face.

# Barriers to Learning

From the flipchart exercise note down some of the issues facing young people in higher education. Fill in a brick with each problem.


Does this picture help you to see that sometimes problems for mentees can feel like a brick wall?

As a mentor you can help them break down the wall, by removing bricks/problems.

Remember that there will be some problems that you cannot help them with, but by helping them with others, the wall has gaps, which they can climb through themselves.

## Helping Strategies

**Mentee in Control**

**Mentor in Control**

# Helping Strategies

<p><b>Taking Action</b> The mentor and mentee decide on a course of action together and then do it.</p>	<p><b>Recommending</b> The mentor gives an explicit recommendation to the mentee on what they should do.</p>
<p><b>'Counselling'</b> The mentor and mentee develop a relationship, based on helping the mentee develop a change.</p>	<p><b>Advising</b> The mentor usually at the request of the mentee offers some advice, but always with the usual safeguards i.e. "you may do things differently to me because of blah blah", or "you actually need to think of your own solutions, lets talk them through".</p>
<p><b>Teaching</b> The mentor teaches the mentee a skill, or imparts knowledge in a directive way.</p>	<p><b>Informing</b> The mentor offers up to date information relevant to the mentees needs, which may help the mentee make a decision.</p>
<p><b>Support</b> The mentor is available to the mentee on an unconditional basis. Support is valued as there are no expectations to live up to.</p>	<p><b>Signposting</b> The mentor may think that someone else within university would be able to help with this situation, and refers the mentee to the right place/person. For the purpose of this exercise the mentor offers to go along too, as an advocate for the mentee.</p>
<p><b>Listening</b> Similar to support.</p>	<p><b>Advocacy</b> The mentor represents or speaks on behalf of the mentee.</p>

# ***Helping Skills***

## **Case Study**

Pick one of the bricks from your brick wall earlier, and have a think about how you might be able to help.

**What was the brick/problem?**

Can you help with this problem?

Do you need to discuss this with anyone else? If so who?

Would you sign post them to anyone else? If so who?

What else could you do? Think about the helping strategies on the last exercise.

# Sign-posting: Who else can help?

Mentors are never expected to have all of the answers, but have you heard the saying, "I know a person who can"?

Have a go at this exercise to see how well you know what support is available in your University, add in any extras you think of and ignore any if you do not have them in your University.

	Who?	Where can I find them?
Dean		
Vice Dean		
Head of department		
Personal Advisor		
Course lecturer		
Mentoring Co-ordinator		
Student Council members		
Other mentors in Department		
Librarian		
University Administrators		
Faculty Office Staff		

Always keep this handy - it is a useful list. You may also find it useful to keep with a list of extra curricular activities within your university, so that you know what happens and when.

# Confidentiality Case Studies

<p>Your mentee tells you someone at home is hurting them, what do you do?</p>	
<p>Your mentee asks you if you can keep a secret. What do you do?</p>	
<p>Your mentee tells you that they have stolen something from another student. What do you do?</p>	
<p>Your mentee tells you something of a personal nature, which is similar to something you have experienced. Do you share your experience with them?</p>	
<p>A parent or friend knows your mentee, and has asked what sort of things you talk about. Can you tell her?</p>	
<p>Your friends are always pushing you to tell them what the problem is with your mentee. How do you handle this?</p>	

# Ground Rules

In groups discuss what can be included under the following headings:

**Confidentiality** is not necessarily about keeping everything secret. It is about being sensitive to each other's thoughts and feelings. After all, if you cannot say something revealing in a mentoring session, where can you say it? However, there are situations which might occur, where you have to inform either the mentoring co-ordinator or a lecturer. What are these?

**Timekeeping for meetings:** good timekeeping works both ways. If problems arise do you know how to contact each other?

**Acceptable behaviour:** what do you consider to be appropriate behaviour within a mentoring relationship? What do you consider to be unacceptable?

# Ground Rules Cards

*Add your own that are specific to your mentoring programme:*

Smiling	Having a sense of humour
Being reliable	Keeping confidences
Showing your mentee respect	Being intelligent
Being helpful	Keeping in contact with Mentoring Co-ordinator
Having lots of ideas	Being co-operative
Being friendly	Being positive
Valuing your mentee's opinion	

# Getting to Know Someone New

Exercise: work in a pair with another pupil from the group who you do not know very well. In pairs spend five minutes getting to know each other. Ask your partner questions to find out more about them.

After 5 minutes feedback to the group:

**What questions did you ask?**

**How did you ask them?**

**Did you find out what you wanted to know?**

**How did it feel?**

The following are examples of topics and questions you could use with your mentee to get to know him/her better. Try and find things that relate to yourself and your mentee. This will make it easier to start a conversation and create a comfortable atmosphere.

Find three things that you and the mentee have in common.

Do they have any brothers or sisters?

What is their favourite television programme?

What does the mentee like to do in his / her spare time?

What is their subject at university? Why have they chosen this?

What are their likes and dislikes?

Do they have any pets?

Do they have any hobbies or interests inside and outside of university?

What sports team do they support?

What do they want to do when they leave university? Why?

# Mentoring: Some Statements

	Agree	Disagree	Not Sure
Mentors do your coursework for you			
Mentors tell you what to do			
Mentors help you choose friends			
Mentors lend you money			
Mentors help you get to know yourself better			
Mentors tell lecturers about problems you have			
Another word for a mentor is a friend			
Mentors sometimes break their promises to you			
Mentors talk about you to their friends			
Mentors meet you regularly			
Mentors tell your parents/friends what you say about them			
Mentors always understand how you feel			
Mentors will help you sort out your love life			

## I would like my mentor to:

	YES	NO	NOT AT PRESENT
Be a support for me			
Help me to be a more confident person			
Help me to organise my time better			
Listen to me			
Help me to plan my coursework and revision			
Help me to find out what I am good at			
Help me to feel able to try new things			
Help me to decide what I want to do in the future			
Help me to understand about university life			
Help me with my coursework			
Help me to improve my spelling/ grammar/writing			
Help me to improve my reading/ understanding			
Help me to improve my IT skills			
Come with me to join university societies			

### **Mentors only:**

Do you think these are things you could help with?

Working in groups, think of how you would begin to work with any of these situations

### **Who or where would you go for help?**

What helping style would you use? (Remember Unit 4 – Counselling, Signposting etc.) What sort of questions would be useful? (Remember Unit 3 – Open / Closed / Probing / Hypothetical)

# What Happens Now?

Name:

There are various opportunities open to peer mentors. In order that we can make the most of your attributes and skills please complete this sheet, so that we can discuss the best opportunity for you.

Please tick the box, which you are most interested in. Numbers for the various activities are sometimes limited, but your skills are always valuable in many others areas.

Opportunity	Dates and Times	Please tick if interested
I would like to become a mentor for new/junior students		
I would like to provide support as a mentor in my subject to junior students		