



# CAREER MENTOR SCHEME

---

## Mentee Training Guide and FAQs

[CAREERMENTORScheme@EXETER.AC.UK](mailto:CAREERMENTORScheme@EXETER.AC.UK)

# WELCOME FROM THE TEAM

**Congratulations on being accepted on to the Career Mentor Scheme!**

You will need this guide to complete the mandatory training prior to being introduced to your mentor. The guide will also help support you through the 6 months of the scheme, and prepare you for a meaningful working relationship with your mentor. It covers topics you may wish to discuss with your mentor such as advice on navigating conversations and guidelines on expected professional behaviour.

Introduction to your mentor will take place in early December/June (depending on the scheme). Please wait to be introduced by the team before contacting your mentor. We ask that you do not make contact before then, including on social media or LinkedIn.

We will send newsletters throughout the scheme and check in on how things are going. Please reply briefly to these emails as it is useful for us to know that all is going well or if there are any issues you need our help with. You do not have to use the resources, they are just for inspiration as each partnership will be unique.

The **FAQ section** at the end of this guide provides general advice, however you can contact the team at any point if you have questions - we are always here to help! This scheme is all about learning and developing in a safe environment, so please take advantage of the support on hand. You can contact us by email on [careermentorscheme@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:careermentorscheme@exeter.ac.uk)

This is a unique opportunity to connect with a professional, receive personalised careers advice and sector insights in your chosen career. We hope taking part in this scheme will really help you to move forward with your career planning.

We hope you enjoy the scheme!



Paula McDonald



Abi Smith



Sarah Hood

# CONTENTS

## PART 1

### INTRODUCTION

Introduction	3
What is Mentoring	3
Why do Mentors Volunteer	5
Expectations of Mentees	5
Your Mentoring Partnership	6

## PART 2

### SCHEME OVERVIEW

Scheme Timeline	7
Key Points to Remember	8

## PART 3

### PRE-SCHEME

What are your goals?	9
Setting SMART Objectives and Action Planning	10

## PART 4

### GETTING STARTED

Your Initial Email	11
Preparing to Meet Your Mentor	11
Meeting your Mentor	12
Staying Professional	12

## PART 5

### DURING THE SCHEME

Keeping In Touch	13
Following Up Meetings	14
Concluding The Scheme	14
The Exeter Award	14
Contact with Your Mentor Post Scheme	14

## PART 6

### FAQS

FAQs	15
Further resources/Appendices	18
• Action plan template	19
• SMART Goals	20
• Meeting agenda template	21
• Elevator pitches	22



# INTRODUCTION



The Career Mentor Scheme is unique to your career journey, but there are some elements that apply to all mentoring partnerships which will be covered in this guide.

By participating in the scheme, you are agreeing to communicate regularly with your mentor. Generally this is 1-2 hours each month, but could be more depending on your schedules.

Bear in mind your mentor is volunteering their time. It's important therefore that you prepare for meetings, and be realistic about committing to more than the 1-2 hours minimum requirement. If you feel that you would not need a mentor for the full 6 months, [Ask an Alum](#) might be more suitable.

## WHAT IS MENTORING?

**Mentor:** *an experienced and trusted adviser*

**Mentoring:** *advise and train someone*

In general terms mentoring is when someone shares their knowledge, skills, and experience with another person to help them to progress. Mentors on the Career Mentor Scheme provide professional advice, in particular focussing on building your career and personal development.

There are limitations as to the extent that the Career Mentor Scheme can help you achieve, so it is important to keep this in mind when creating your Action Plan and SMART goals (more on this later in the guide).

### Definition of mentoring

"Mentoring is to support and encourage people to manage their own learning in order that they may maximise their potential, develop their skills, improve their performance and become the person they want to be."

Eric Parsloe, Oxford School of Coaching and Mentoring

## WHAT IS MENTORING? CONT..

### Career Mentoring is:

- ✔ An opportunity to make a professional connection.
- ✔ A partnership that develops over 6 months, which encourages learning and development.
- ✔ Focused on expanding horizons and thought processes and developing your decision-making skills.
- ✔ Focused on building your personal and professional development.
- ✔ Personalised to you and your career aims.
- ✔ An honest and supportive process.
- ✔ Confidential (within appropriate boundaries).

### Career Mentoring is not:

- ✘ An opportunity to ask for 'favours'. i.e. asking for a job, work experience or an internship; or an introduction to hiring managers.
- ✘ Direct sponsorship.
- ✘ Your mentor doing work or making decisions on your behalf.
- ✘ Access to your mentor's network contacts.
- ✘ Always task focused: discussions about your career can be just as useful!
- ✘ Therapy for personal issues.
- ✘ A tutor-student relationship with the main focus on improving your academic work or language ability.
- ✘ A friend-friend relationship with the main focus being on personal development outside of work.

# WHY DO MENTORS VOLUNTEER?

Our mentors are professional volunteers who give their time for free and are extremely valuable to us and the University. We take time to forge positive relationships with them and they may also be engaged in other activities across the University. Please ensure that you always act in a respectful and professional way, keeping in mind that your mentor's interaction with you could influence their decisions as to how much time and support they wish to give to the University, and your fellow students, in future.

There are various reasons why they choose to volunteer, but ultimately they have a desire to help you reach your full potential. These are some of the benefits of taking part in the scheme for mentors (it may give you some ideas of what you can talk to your mentor about, outside of your own development!):

- A good opportunity to give back to the University.
- A chance to gain an insight into current student life.
- Opportunity to catch up on news regarding the University.
- Provides an opportunity to work with someone with a fresh perspective.
- Opens up the potential to learn about a different culture.
- They can reflect upon their own achievements and career path.
- Provides an opportunity to gain voluntary experience for their CV.
- A way to gain information and develop advice and guidance skills.
- A way to develop communications skills by working with someone they wouldn't usually be in regular contact with.

## EXPECTATIONS OF MENTEES

As a mentee on the scheme, certain expectations need to be met.

### 1 READ THIS GUIDE/COMPLETE TRAINING

It covers everything you need during the scheme and answers any questions you may have. You will be expected to complete a training quiz and will only be introduced to your mentor once this has been completed. The answers to the quiz can be found in this guide.

### 2 REGULAR COMMUNICATION

You should be talking to your mentor for a minimum of 1-2 hours per month, but it could be more regularly. Set out timescales with your mentor at the beginning of the scheme and let them know if you will be unavailable for a period time (due to exams etc.)

### 3 TALK TO THE TEAM

We are here to help, but can only support with problems we know about! Please keep us up to date with how the partnership is going, both the positives and challenges! We'll send newsletters during the scheme and check in with you so you have an opportunity to feedback to us.

### 4 COMPLETE THE FEEDBACK

At the end of the scheme, you will need to complete the feedback form as part of the conditions of participating in the scheme. Feedback is valuable in helping us make improvements.

**It is your responsibility to keep communication going with your mentor! The Exeter Award will be issued to mentees who complete the full 6 months of the scheme.**

# YOUR MENTORING PARTNERSHIP

The mentoring partnership is unique to you, and although it is the responsibility of all parties to ensure that the partnership runs smoothly, **as the mentee you are expected to take the lead in contacting your mentor every month. It is ultimately your responsibility to ensure your continued engagement in the scheme.** This means being proactive in setting up meetings and sending polite follow up correspondence to your mentor if you do not get a response. We would recommend waiting about one week to send a follow up, if required. If you still do not get a response send an email to **careermentorscheme@exeter.ac.uk** and the coordinators who will make further enquiries on your behalf

There are lots of benefits to being a mentee but please be aware of the limitations too. The following outlines what help you can and can't ask your mentor for.

## WHAT CAN I ASK ABOUT?

## WHAT CAN'T I ASK ABOUT?

Job hunting techniques, including support writing, and checking your CV, covering letters and application forms. How to find and apply for work experience



A job opportunity, work placement, or work shadowing

Skills required for the workplace and how to develop these



Visa support or sponsorship (The University can provide advice, please see the FAQs)

Networking groups and events, and how to navigate these. What professional bodies would be relevant to join



Access to their networks or contacts

Sector insights and typical work activities



Help with your academic work or language support

Navigating personal and professional boundaries



Personal advice and issues (see the FAQs for where to get wellbeing support from the University)

Relevant media, e.g. industry magazines, blogs and podcasts



Language support (see further resources for support)

# SCHEME OVERVIEW

## SCHEME TIMELINE

Below is an outline of the scheme's 6 month structure (depending on whether you are on the winter or summer scheme). The actual conversations and objectives of your mentoring partnership will be unique to your needs, and there's a more detailed action plan for you to complete at the end of this guide.



### SEPTEMBER - NOVEMBER / MARCH - MAY

- Apply to the scheme
- Read training guide and complete the quiz
- Prepare your action plan and questions



### DECEMBER/JUNE

- CMS team introduces you to your mentor at the beginning of the month
- Send initial email to mentor, within 3 working days of introduction
- Plan first meeting



### JANUARY/JULY

- Receive CMS Newsletter
- Check-in with the CMS team



### FEBRUARY/AUGUST

- Half-way point - review action plan and progress, adjust where needed



### MARCH/SEPTEMBER

- Receive CMS Newsletter
- Check-in with the CMS team



### APRIL/OCTOBER

- Review your SMART goals and plan any final objectives for the end of the scheme



### MAY/NOVEMBER

- Conclude mentoring partnership
- Complete feedback form
- Receive the Exeter Award



## PART 2

# KEY POINTS

### 01

#### TRAINING

You will be expected to read this guide and complete the quiz before your mentoring partnership begins. You will not be introduced to your mentor until you have done so and failure to complete training will result in your application being withdrawn.

### 02

#### CONTACTING YOUR MENTOR

After completing the quiz, you will be introduced to your mentor via email at the beginning of June/December (depending on scheme). You are expected to contact your mentor via email within 3 working days. In this email, we recommend that you introduce yourself, outline your aims for the scheme, ask your mentor one or two questions about themselves and suggest an initial meeting.

### 03

#### SETTING OBJECTIVES AND ACTION PLANNING

You should have an idea of your objectives for the scheme before introduction to your mentor, (although these may change). We advise that you spend your first meeting with your mentor agreeing the objectives you wish to achieve and completing the six-month action plan to ensure these are met.

### 04

#### PROFESSIONALISM

By participating in this scheme, you have agreed to act as an ambassador for the University. Therefore, you are expected to act in a professional manner at all times with anyone that you meet through the scheme and to complete tasks in a timely manner.

### 05

#### CONFIDENTIALITY

Please remember the need to keep information discussed between you and your mentor and any information about their organisation confidential.

### 06

#### STAY CONNECTED

Please keep the scheme staff updated with your progress and contact us if you have any questions during the scheme. Regularly check your email, including during vacation periods and respond to any emails from your mentor and the Career Mentor Scheme team within 3 working days.

### 07

#### FEEDBACK AND EVALUATION

You will be asked to complete an evaluation form at the end of the scheme. By signing up to the scheme you have committed to providing this information.

**Any questions? Contact the team at [careermentorscheme@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:careermentorscheme@exeter.ac.uk)**

# PART THREE

## PRE-SCHEME

### WHAT ARE YOUR GOALS

Before the partnership gets underway it's important to think about what *you* want to achieve at the end of the six months. Is it to apply for jobs, to be more confident in interviews, to decide if this is the right career for you?

Partnerships will have different objectives depending on individual career aspirations, but you should have enough objectives to sustain the partnership over six months. **We suggest preparing 6 SMART goals prior to meeting your mentor.** By doing so, you will be able to present them with clear ideas on how to reach those goals and thereby get the most from the scheme.

Below are suggestions of common objectives to get you started. You can either use the Goals worksheet at the end of this guide or create a separate record to keep track.

Job hunting objectives	Personal development objectives	Sector-related career support
Increase my knowledge of job-hunting resources in this sector.	Improve my personal development skills (e.g. confidence building, listening skills).	How to gain professional contacts and networking skills.
Increase my knowledge of effective applications in this sector.	Improve my knowledge of further education / professional courses related to this sector.	Increase my knowledge of sector entry requirements.
Increase my knowledge of effective interview techniques in this sector.		Increase my knowledge of good/bad aspects of the profession.
Increase my knowledge of finding internships and work experience in this sector.		Receive work experience / job shadowing (not offered by all mentors and not an expectation of the scheme).
		Receive help to improve my CV.

### Remember!

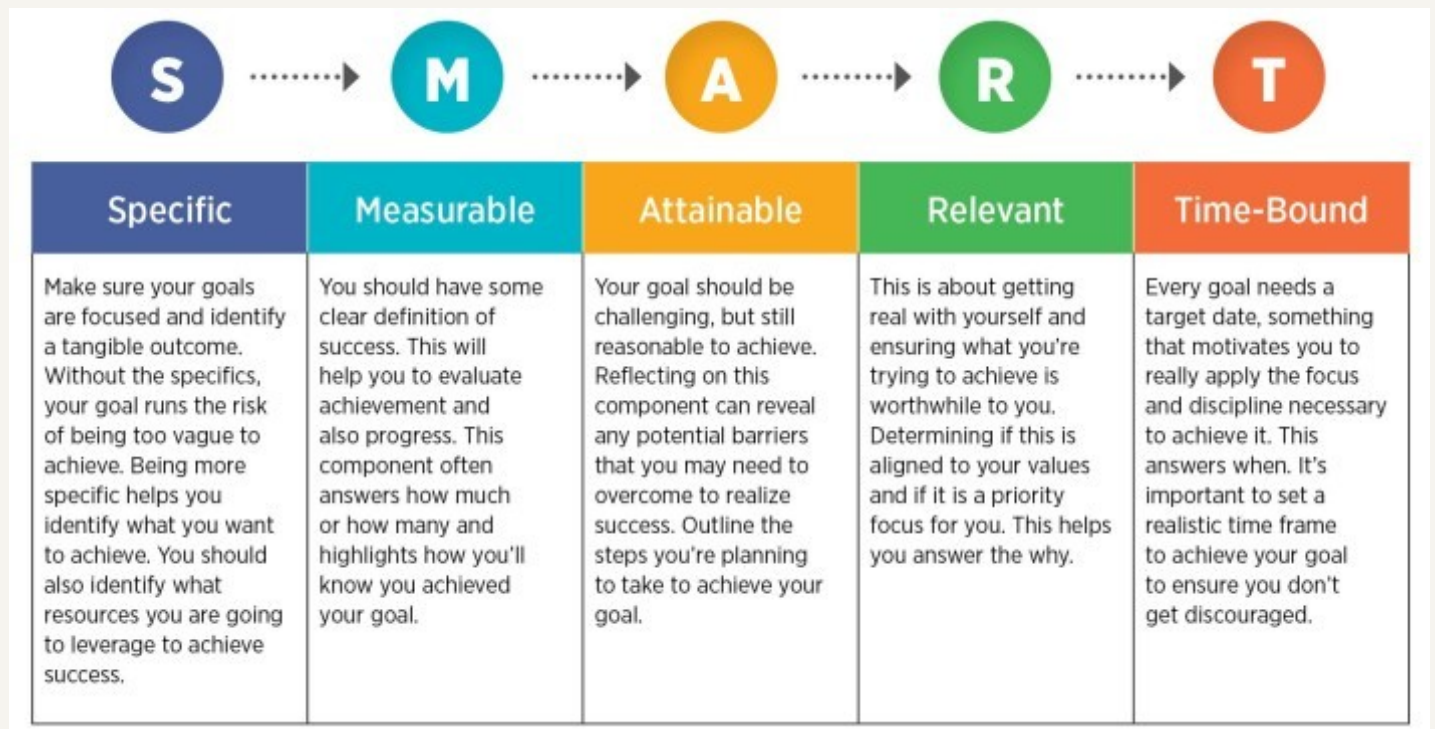
You are not bound by your objectives. It's important to keep reviewing and revising them during the scheme.

If a goal you set at the beginning of the scheme is no longer relevant to your career planning feel free to amend it

# SETTING SMART OBJECTIVES AND ACTION PLANNING

Setting SMART objectives can help you to clarify your ideas, focus your efforts, use your time and resources productively, and increase your chances of achieving what you want.

Here's a breakdown of what a SMART objective is:



Once you have your objectives and SMART Goals, use them to populate an action plan. This should incorporate the practical steps you take to meet your SMART goals. Having an Action Plan will keep you on track and help you to make the most of the scheme. Remember to keep it updated, and if your end goal changes during the scheme, update your Action Plan to align with this. It is also good to share this with your mentor so they can contribute.

Templates for your SMART goals and Action Plan can be found in part 6 of this guide to get you started. You can use them or feel free to design your own.

## NOTE:

It's good to plan your SMART goals before the scheme starts, but remember to share these with your mentor as they may change slightly during your initial conversations.

# PART FOUR

## GETTING STARTED

### YOUR INITIAL EMAIL

After receiving your mentor's contact details, **it is your responsibility to contact them within three working days.**

- Think about what to say before you receive their contact details. It is key to remember that your mentor has volunteered their time, and actively wants to support and help you
- Introduce yourself and your broad aims for the scheme,
- Ask how and when they would like to set up the first meeting.
- Thank them for this opportunity
- Be professional and pay attention to grammar etc.

**More information about elevator pitches can be found in part 6 of this guide.**

Dear

Thank you for agreeing to mentor me during the scheme. My name is Joe Smith, originally from Hampshire, and I am now studying History at the Penryn campus. I'm in my third year, and will be graduating next June. I am interested in a career in marketing, although I haven't yet decided which specific area. I applied to the Career Mentor Scheme to gain a better understanding of the roles available, as well as the recruitment process. I am really interested in your career background, and appreciate the time you're volunteering on the scheme. It would be great to arrange a meeting with you, please could you let me know your availability.

Many thanks,  
Joe

### PREPARING TO MEET YOUR MENTOR

Before beginning your mentoring partnership, it is good to be familiar with your mentor's professional expertise so you have an understanding of how they can support you.

- Read through their mentor profile, check their LinkedIn page, Google etc.. **Please remember not to contact them at this stage.**
- Research their business or organisation, including:
  - their mission statement, aims, and objectives
  - the culture and ethics
  - their Corporate Social Responsibilities
- Who are the competitors?
- What is the state of the sector and any current influences?

## PART FOUR

# MEETING YOUR MENTOR

When planning a meeting with your mentor, propose a few dates and times, ideally with at least two weeks notice, and remember to check if they are in the same time zone as you! If you are meeting your mentor in person, meet somewhere public and professional such as on campus, a café or library. Keep a record of your meeting and discussions and if you would like to record any virtual meetings, ensure you have your mentors permission.

It is good to set an agenda prior to the meeting, so both you and your mentor know what the focus is. Spend some time before you meet putting together thoughts and questions to make the most of your time. Some ideas include:

### How you both see the partnership working:

- ✓ Aims (purpose of the scheme)
- ✓ Structure (setting your objectives and 6 month action plan)
- ✓ Frequency and method of contact
- ✓ Duration of meetings
- ✓ Confidentiality (commercial and personal, and exceptions)

### Getting to know your mentor

- ✓ Education
- ✓ Career history
- ✓ Current employer
- ✓ Typical day at work
- ✓ Skills used in their work
- ✓ Build rapport

At the end of your meeting, make sure you thank your mentor for their time.

# STAYING PROFESSIONAL

Ensure all your communications with your mentor are professional. This means:

- Respectful communication (including correct grammar & spelling)
- Appropriate image - respecting professional cultural norms eg. dress code
- Take the lead in contacting your mentor, reply in a timely manner
- Be positive and enthusiastic: contribute ideas and provide constructive feedback if asked
- Be honest about your career needs and wishes
- Think 'Integrity'- fulfil your commitments

# DURING THE SCHEME

## KEEPING IN TOUCH

It is important to keep the momentum going throughout the scheme and **the expectation is that you will be ultimately responsible for this**. Try to plan the next meeting or contact at the end of each session and review your overall aims for the scheme regularly, as these may change over time.

Be mindful of completing any tasks your mentor may have set within the agreed timeframe. We understand that life doesn't always go to plan but if this situation arises, good communication is really important. Here are some examples of challenges you may experience and what you should do. For a more comprehensive list go to the **FAQs in Part Six**.

**Situation: My academic workload has suddenly increased, I have exams, I have some personal issues, I'm feeling overwhelmed by my commitments. I have a holiday booked.**

**Solution:** Let your mentor know as soon as you are aware so expectations can be managed.

**Situation: I'm feeling overwhelmed and not sure if I can continue with the scheme.**

**Solution:** Let your mentor or the Career Mentor Scheme team know as soon as possible. It might be that a solution can be found. Although it is tempting to disengage often a solution can be found.

**Situation: I'm having difficulties with my mentor.**

**Solution:** Contact the Career Mentor Scheme team, let us know what the difficulties are and we will we try to find a solution.

**Situation: I haven't heard from my mentor after sending a follow up email.**

**Solution:** Contact the Career Mentor Scheme team and we will try to contact your mentor by alternative means.

If you are unavailable at any time during the scheme, for travel or exams etc., please let your mentor know in advance and when they can expect to hear from you again. It could be useful to share the University term dates with your mentor.

Wherever possible uphold commitments you have made. However, if there is a genuine reason why you cannot do so, it is very important that you communicate this to your mentor professionally and in good time. You should then work with them to resolve the issue and agree an amended action plan.

Be honest about your needs and wishes through the duration of the scheme. Of course, you want to push yourself and achieve as much as you can with your mentor but be realistic. It is better to achieve 5 objectives really well during the 6 months, than to half-achieve 10!

## **FOLLOWING UP MEETINGS**

It's a good idea to follow the meeting with an email summarising your discussions and confirming your actions to complete. You should also confirm the date and time for your next meeting or confirm that you will be in touch with suggested dates.

Following each meeting, reflect on what was discussed. Consider how the experiences and scenarios discussed made you feel. Think what you might say consequently and what you might do in light of them.

## **CONCLUDING THE SCHEME**

Your mentor will have given a lot of time and effort to your partnership. It is important to do the following:

- ✦ Thank your mentor for their time and for sharing their expertise. End the relationship positively... you never know if a mentor may pop up later in your career!
- ✦ Share key aspects of your learning journey and what aspects you found the most helpful.
- ✦ Offer appropriate feedback to support the mentor's professional development.
- ✦ Consider ways that the relationship might continue further (if both parties agree) e.g. professional channels like LinkedIn or networking opportunities?

## **THE EXETER AWARD**

Completing the 6 month scheme will contribute towards The Exeter Award which is designed to:

- Enhance your employability and boost your CV.
- Give you recognition from the University of Exeter for the activities you are participating in as part of your studies and outside of your studies.
- Develop a range of skills to take forward into graduate jobs market.
- Demonstrate to employers the skills and attributes that Exeter graduates have attained.

## **CONTACT WITH YOUR MENTOR POST SCHEME**

Not every mentor is in a position to offer help beyond the end of the scheme. Mentors often volunteer for subsequent schemes, or have other work commitments which means they may be unable to support you further. Do talk to your mentor towards the end of the scheme, to see if they are able to have further contact with you, and how this would look for them. Please note that any contact beyond the 6 months of the scheme will be outside of the Career Mentor Scheme umbrella.

# FAQS, FURTHER RESOURCES AND APPENDICES

**Q How do I contact my mentor?**

**A** We will send an introductory email to you and your mentor with both your email addresses and in most cases, their phone number. You should then email your mentor within 3 days to introduce yourself. Discuss with your mentor early in the partnership how they prefer to be contacted.

**Q I've sent my mentor an introductory email, but they haven't responded.**

**A** Sometimes emails can get misdirected to junk boxes, especially from new email address. We recommend leaving at least a working days to give your mentor time to respond. If your mentor hasn't replied within this time, you can send a polite follow-up email to check if they received your email. Please let the Career Mentoring Team know at this time that you are having trouble, and we can contact your mentor on your behalf.

**Q I can no longer make the meeting I've arranged with my mentor, what do I do?**

**A** It is important you prioritise your commitments to your mento. In situations where you are running late, need to rearrange plans, or in extenuating circumstances, have to cancel your meeting, please contact your mentor as soon as possible. Explain the situation, and why it is unavoidable, apologise, and ask if it's possible to rearrange. You can suggest multiple alternative times that you are able to meet.

**Q What is the expected amount of contact?**

**A** 1-2 hours per month, but it can be more depending on both your and your mentor's availability.

**Q My mentor has offered me an opportunity, can I accept?**

**A** Occasionally mentors may be able to offer an introduction or work experience/shadowing opportunity etc., which you can accept, however this should be done freely at the mentor's discretion and not by request.

**Q I'm having difficulties with my mentor, what can I do?**

**A** Contact the Career Mentor team as soon as possible with the details, and we will support you.

**Q My mentor has asked me to complete tasks by a deadline, but I don't think I'm able to.**

**A** The key is always communication! When setting your action plan with your mentor, try to be realistic with your workload and what other commitments you have. If you're aware that you have a busy period (for assignments, traveling, non-academic work etc.), please be honest with your mentor and suggest an alternative date that you know you're able to meet. If you realise that you're unable to meet an upcoming deadline, let your mentor know as soon as possible, and when you will be able to complete it.



**Q Are my conversations with my mentor confidential?**

**A** You should expect that your conversations with your mentor will remain confidential, in terms of both what you share with them and what they share with you. This applies to any personal details and experience and commercial confidentiality. It is possible that you will have access to sensitive information pertaining to your mentor's role or organisation. You should not share this information with anyone else and should always act with discretion. There may be some extreme situations in which confidentiality should be broken. This would generally be in the case of one party having serious concerns that the other is a danger to themselves or to others, or that there is a likelihood of a serious crime being committed. If you have any concerns please contact the Career Mentor Scheme team

**Q My mentor has been great and I'd like the partnership to continue after the scheme!**

**A** As much as we would like to, not every mentor is in a position to offer help beyond the end of the scheme. Mentors often volunteer for subsequent schemes, or have other work commitments which means they are unable to support further. Do talk to your mentor towards the end of the scheme, to see if they are able to have further contact with you, and how this would look for them. Any contact beyond the six-months of the scheme will be outside of the Career Mentor Scheme umbrella.

**Q I have a disability/health condition that is affecting my mentoring partnership.**

**A** We recommend sharing any relevant health and disability information with your mentor so that they can offer you maximum support. The decision to disclose any information is a very personal one, however if you do decide to share information it will be treated in the strictest confidence. Further information on disclosing a disability can be found on the "Supporting Equality and Diversity" section of the Career Zone. If you prefer, the team can speak with your mentor on your behalf. Please contact us to discuss how we can best support you.

**Q I'm feeling overwhelmed and am not sure I can continue with the scheme.**

**A** The scheme should only be 1-2hours per month commitment, and anything above this is optional between you and your mentor. If you feel overwhelmed with the workload, speak to your mentor about how you can spread this out over the six months of the scheme. The Career Mentor team can also speak to your mentor on your behalf if you prefer.

**Q I need wellbeing support, can my mentor provide this?**

**A** Your mentor isn't able to support you in a wellbeing capacity, but there are support services within the university which you can utilise. The university has dedicated wellbeing support for students to access, and all of the University's wellbeing services can be found here. If you feel you need urgent support, you can access it here. You're able to book an appointment with Wellbeing either for a phone or in-person appointment, and they also have "Quick Query" appointments, which are 20-minute slots bookable on the day. You can contact the team directly at [wellbeing@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:wellbeing@exeter.ac.uk) and [Accessibility@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:Accessibility@exeter.ac.uk).

**Q****I need academic support, can my mentor provide this?****A**

Your mentor isn't able to support you in an academic capacity where this is not linked to your career, but you can speak with your personal tutor and the Study Skills team for support.  
<https://www.exeter.ac.uk/students/studyzone/>

**Q****I need support with visas / working internationally, can my mentor support me?****A**

Your mentor isn't able to support with visa questions or working internationally. You can find further support for this within the Career Zone and the International Student Support Office.  
<https://www.exeter.ac.uk/students/international/>

**Q****I don't feel mentoring is for me anymore, what do I do?****A**

The mentoring partnership is focused on your needs, and these can and mostly do change along the way. If you have completed all the objectives you set at the beginning of the scheme, or if these don't feel relevant to you anymore, you can still speak with your mentor about more general employability advice such as CV and application support, and developing your soft-skills. If you've explored these avenues, and still feel you have nothing else to talk about, please speak with the Career Mentor team about withdrawing.

**Q****I've changed my mind on my career, and my mentor doesn't feel relevant to me anymore.****A**

Your mentor can support you generally with employability skills such as CV and application support, so you may be able to complete the scheme in a more general capacity rather than sector-specific. It's important to keep having honest conversations with your mentor and the team about your career plans and if these have changed. You must talk to the Career Mentor team before you make any decisions about your mentoring partnership.

**Q****Can I do the Career Mentor Scheme again?****A**

You can take part in multiple career mentor schemes, up to three years post-graduation however, you are unable to choose the same mentor twice.

**Q****Can I take part in Ask An Alum whilst a mentee?****A**

Yes! Sometimes it is helpful to have more than one viewpoint, or to ask any questions that your mentor is unable to help with. Find out more about the scheme at <https://www.exeter.ac.uk/careers/employability-schemes/aaa/>

**Q****My mentor hasn't been in regular contact with me.****A**

If you haven't heard from your mentor for a while (more than three weeks since the last contact); please let the Career Mentor team know and we will be able to help. Please remember that mentors do have other commitments, and may be away on annual leave etc., so they cannot always be in contact.

**Q****I'm not going to be available for a few weeks, what do I do?****A**

There will of course be periods that you may not be able to contact your mentor, either for academic or personal reasons. Please keep your mentor updated and let them know in advance when you will be away, and when they can expect contact.

**Q****How do I contact the Career Mentor team?****A**

The Career Mentor Team (Paula, Abi and Victoria) can be contacted at [careermentorscheme@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:careermentorscheme@exeter.ac.uk). The inbox is monitored Monday - Friday, 9am - 5pm.

# Other Resources

The University has a wealth of other resources you can utilise during the scheme, including:



[MORE INFO](#)

## CAREER ZONE

The Career Zone offers a huge range of support, including 1:1 career advice, workshops, programmes such as Grand Challenges, Exeter Award, Professional Pathways, and Ask An Alum



[MORE INFO](#)

## WELLBEING

If you are ever experiencing any personal difficulties that you would like support for, the University has a number of agencies (internal and external) you can refer to. See <http://www.exeter.ac.uk/students/az-services/>

Current students can contact Student Wellbeing Services for specialist support.



[MORE INFO](#)

## LANGUAGE SUPPORT

If you would like further support developing your English speaking skills, you can contact the International Student Support Emma Sweeney

# Appendices

## ACTION PLAN

DATE	OBJECTIVE	ACTION	BY WHO?	BY WHEN?	NOTES
MONTH 1	Establish mentoring relationship	Send introductory email and arrange first meeting	Mentee	Within 3 days of receiving mentor's details	
MONTH 6	Evaluate Partnership	Complete online evaluation form	Mentee	End of scheme	

# SMART GOALS

GOAL	<u>S</u> PECIFIC	<u>M</u> EASURABLE	<u>A</u> CHIEVABLE	<u>R</u> ELEVANT	<u>T</u> IME-BASED
	Clearly state objective. Limit misinterpretation	How will you measure success?	Do you have the resources, knowledge, and experience to achieve this?	Does it contribute to your aims?	What is the completion deadline?
<i>Grow professional network</i>	<i>Using LinkedIn, I will connect with people from X organisation</i>	<i>I will connect with three people from the organisation</i>	<i>I already have LinkedIn and know where there are organisation employees on there</i>	<i>It will give insight into the types of people already at the organisation</i>	<i>I will do this within the first month of the scheme</i>



# ELEVATOR PITCHES

An elevator pitch is an introductory summary about you and your goals. They tend to be short and succinct, usually 60 seconds long, with the aim of the other person wanting to follow up with you.

Many of us are unsure of what to say or how to talk about ourselves when first introduced to someone. Each new encounter could be the one that makes all the difference, and so you need to be prepared to be able to get across succinctly who you are, what you do and what you are aiming for, It is a good technique to become familiar with, especially if you are meeting people through networking events. It is also useful in interviews to answer the question "Tell me about yourself".

A good elevator pitch should include:

1. Who you are
2. What you do
3. Why you are unique
4. Your goals and ambitions

**01** Depending on the situation, you may need to provide context to who you are and why they should listen. This could be done by presenting the problem, the solution, and why you are the key.

Many media companies struggle to attract new customers, as they are so busy being focused on delivery. Often they only grow through referrals.

I specialise in business development for international media businesses with online advertising platforms

**02** When talking about what you do, it's important to keep it relevant to your listener and free from jargon. You can talk about a recent project or previous job roles etc.

I have developed a network of contacts across Europe in the media industry, and am comfortable with new business and account management working with clients at all levels of seniority

**03** Demonstrate how you stand out from others, whether they are other interview candidates or business competitors. Highlight your unique qualities and how this benefits the listener

With a degree in media and the last 5 years spent networking in the industry seeing first-hand how different businesses operate, i have built up a great contact book and understanding of what matters to buyers.

**04** Be clear about what you want and align it to what the listener is looking for. Ideally, your pitch should show how you can fulfil their needs

I'd be interested to talk to you to see if there is an opportunity for me to help you win more customers, and give me a chance to further develop my career in the market. It depends on what your priorities are, but what do you think?



- Keep it relevant to your listener - it might need changing for each audience
- Use plain language
- Practice so it sounds genuine and natural
- Keep it short to retain attention, but with substance to provide context
- Remember it's a conversation starter - ending it on a question requires a response and (hopefully!) an ongoing conversation!

# LASTLY...

We really hope that you will have a positive experience of the Career Mentor Scheme and that you will find it beneficial. Please remember that the mentoring team are here to help and support you should you ever need it. Even if it is a small thing that you would like to run past us, please always feel free to do so. We are here for problems big and small, and we would always rather hear from you than discover at the end of the 6-month scheme that you had encountered an issue you could not resolve alone and have therefore not benefitted from your mentoring partnership. Our door is always open, and we love to hear from you! Enjoy the scheme...

**CAREERMENTORScheme@  
EXETER.AC.UK**