



Professionalism

As a Peer Leader / Mentor, you may be perceived by students as representing your discipline and the University. Therefore when approaching your role, you need to take the following into consideration:

Avoid being critical

When interacting with your mentees, avoid criticising University staff/tutors or other Peer Leader / Mentors despite any issues that may be coming up in conversation. You will be drawing on your experiences to give guidance, some of which may have been bad experiences during your course. However it is key to give any advice in a respectful way and avoid criticising the University or a particular course – this won't help the students!

Positive focus

During your sessions with mentees, try to always offer a positive approach. For instance, try to give a positive response to a student's question or comment and give reassurance where possible. The aim of the Peer Programme is to create an environment in which students feel safe when asking the basic questions that they perhaps do not want to ask a tutor about. Mentees should not be made to feel embarrassed about not knowing something.

Model good student behaviour

Try to model good student behaviour such as punctuality, reliability and active listening/discussion. Avoid saying things like 'first year doesn't count' or 'reading isn't necessary' – again draw on your own experience but with an understanding that people learn differently.

Effective planning

You will be meeting with mentees at regular intervals and you will need to be prepared for these. Where will you hold the meetings? When will you hold the meetings? How will you inform your group? What will the session be about?

Sessions that are structured have been shown to be vastly more effective. A brief plan/structure for each session could consist of:

- Aim of the session – main message
- Content notes
- Approx. timings
- Discussion / Q&A opportunity