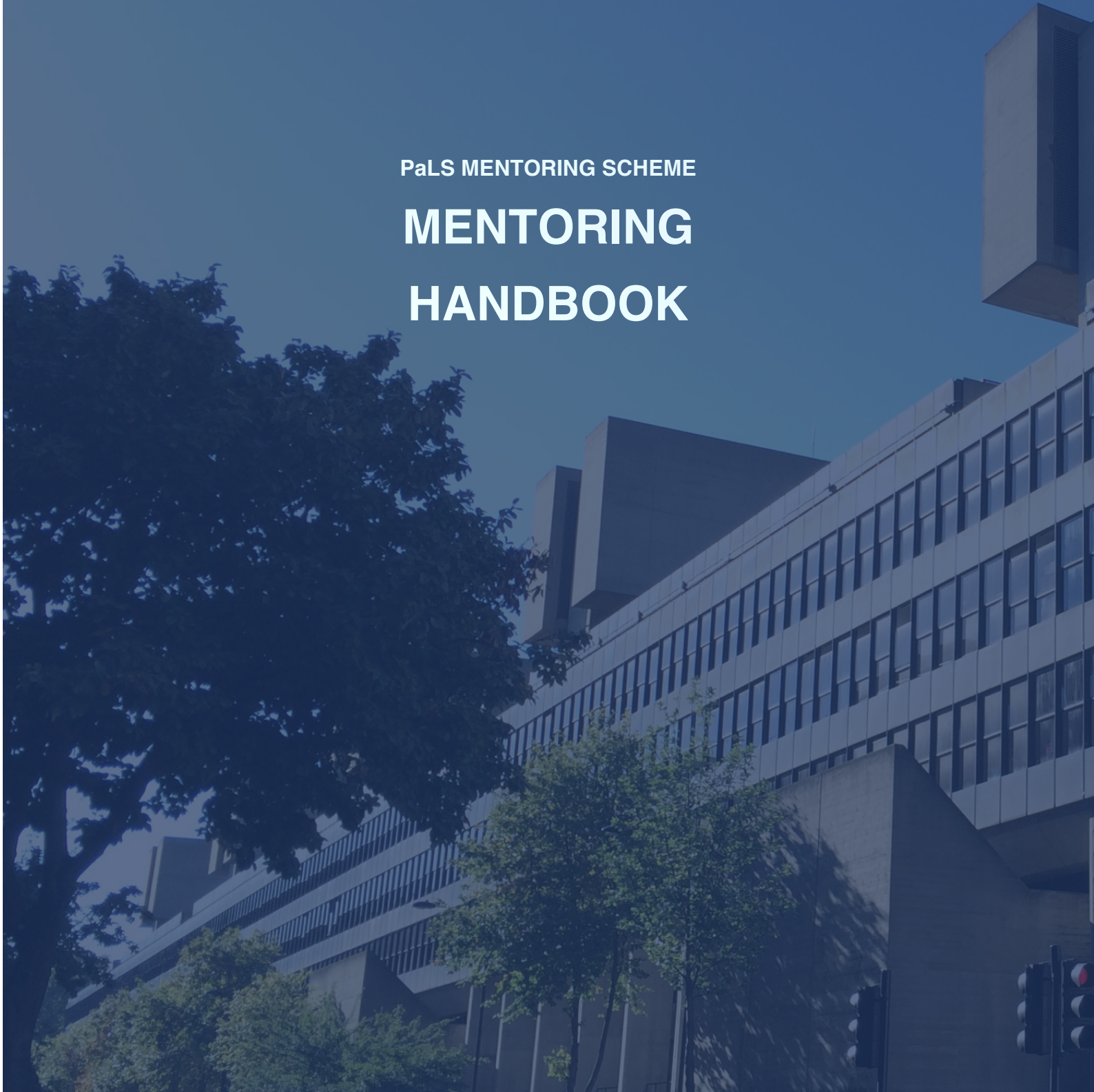




# UCL

PaLS MENTORING SCHEME

# MENTORING HANDBOOK



# Welcome!

Mentoring is a crucial part of supporting career progression and we are dedicated to trying to find an appropriate mentor for any person who requests one in PaLS.

This handbook has been produced to provide guidance and to help mentor and mentees make the most of this relationship.

We welcome feedback about this handbook. Please contact Prof Sam Gilbert, PaLS Mentoring Scheme Lead ([sam.gilbert@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:sam.gilbert@ucl.ac.uk)) or Dr Katherine Ellis, PaLS Mentoring Scheme Co-Lead ([k.ellis@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:k.ellis@ucl.ac.uk)).

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## Mentoring – what is it?

*“**Mentorship** is the influence, guidance, or direction given by a mentor. **A mentor** is someone who teaches or gives help and advice to a less experienced and often younger person.”*

*Source: Wikipedia*

Mentoring enables people to achieve their potential through a work-based relationship between two parties who are not connected within a line management structure. At its core, a successful mentoring relationship relies on two important factors:

- the **mentor** should be **more experienced** than the mentee and guides the mentee towards an agreed objective that is **connected to a career plan**.
- the **mentee** takes primary responsibility for **managing their learning** with the help of the mentor.

Mentoring is a crucial part of supporting career progression. At PaLS we are dedicated to trying to find an appropriate mentor for any person who requests one.

### ***Who can be a mentor?***

Anyone at postdoctoral or more senior level is welcome to join the scheme as a mentor. We encourage both senior staff and those at an earlier career stage to join the scheme. The knowledge and experience of earlier-career staff may be more recent and relevant for some mentees, while the expertise of senior staff may be particularly beneficial for others.

### ***Who can be a mentee?***

All academic staff and post-upgrade PhD students are invited to join the scheme.

### ***Can I be both a mentee and a mentor?***

Yes! This is encouraged. For example, a postdoctoral researcher might benefit both from mentoring a PhD student and also from being mentored by a more senior member of academic staff.

### ***How can mentees benefit?***

- Receiving advice in shaping career direction;
- Receiving guidance on UCL/PaLS policies and procedures for career and salary progression;
- Advice on goal prioritisation, planning, and how to resolve issues at work;
- Help and advice on how to improve your CV;
- Building confidence;
- Creating new opportunities for networking.

### ***How can mentors benefit?***

- Involvement in a programme of strategic importance to your Division, formally recognised as part of the PaLS Workload Scheme.
- Mentoring is a promotion enabling and citizenship activity which is encouraged by the Division and the Faculty.
- Funding bodies increasingly value an active mentoring programme and often encourage senior staff to be mentors.
- Developing mentoring/coaching skills.
- Increased confidence.
- Personal fulfilment, particularly satisfaction from seeing junior staff progress.

### ***How are mentor-mentee pairings made?***

We will pair mentees with a mentor that is more senior and based in a different Research Department at PaLS, to ensure no conflict of interest.

Mentoring is a voluntary scheme. Each mentor/mentee pair will be required to agree and sign a mentoring agreement setting up mutual responsibilities and expectations. The mentor or mentee will be able to withdraw from the scheme at any point.

# Expectations

## ***As a mentor***

As a mentor you should expect to:

- Be trained on basic mentoring skills
- Understand, and be familiar with, UCL Academic Careers Promotions Framework
- Be assigned a mentee (or, if you agree, more than one mentee) who is in a different PaLS research department, and more junior than you
- Respond to the needs and agenda of the mentee
- Treat information given by the mentees confidentially except in exceptional circumstances (see later section)
- Meet with mentee(s) at least 3 times a year, with the frequency to be agreed between mentor and mentee in the first meeting

## ***As a mentee***

As a mentee you should expect to:

- see your mentor at least 3 times a year
- be listened to
- take primary responsibility for managing your participation in the scheme
- have information you share with the mentor treated confidentially except in exceptional circumstances (see later section)
- be encouraged by the mentor to reflect and make independent decisions
- be encouraged to consider your future aspirations
- receive advice about promotions or CV development
- feedback on your experiences of the mentor scheme (for scheme evaluation)

# What happens at meetings?

## ***The first meeting***

A good mentoring relationship starts with **preparation** by both parties. It is a good idea for the mentor and the mentee to have a written agreement for how they intend to work together. This may change or need to be renegotiated over time. The agreement may include the following:

- Boundaries/ground rules, agreement concerning any areas that are off limits
- Create a set of specific short term and long-term objectives for the relationship.
- Clear method of tracking objectives and progress and agreed record keeping.
- Agree methods of contact, time, and venues for meetings.
- List the preliminary career development goals for the mentee.
- Note the expectations that both of you have for the relationship.
- List the necessary contributions that both must make so the relationship will work.
- Agree on confidentiality.
- Identify any conflicts of interest e.g. job applications, line management relationships.

## ***Subsequent meetings***

The timetable for further meetings will be agreed between the mentor and mentee to fit both the mentee's desired outcomes and the mentor's responsibilities within UCL and elsewhere. Content will, of course, be determined by the mentee's own specific objectives.

As a matter of course both the mentor and mentee should provide each other with regular feedback.

We would expect mentors and mentees to meet at least three times a year, with an initial expectation of a 12-month basis. The mentoring pairing can then be renewed for another 12 months if both mentee and mentor agree.

## ***What about confidentiality?***

### **Mentor-Mentee pairings are strictly confidential.**

For the mentoring relationship to succeed, it must be **completely confidential**. Any information that the mentor receives about the organisation or other individuals will be kept confidential and not relayed to co-workers or exploited for personal gain. The exception to this will be in the case of information which the mentor believes shows the organisation or individual to be at risk. In these cases, the mentor will discuss the course of action with the mentee before talking to the leads of the mentoring scheme. In addition, the mentor may, in general terms, relay concerns expressed by more than one mentee e.g. where there is a concern about a procedure or policy.

## ***What happens if things go wrong?***

Taking early action is always best. Please talk to us if you have any concerns.

Typical issues may be:

- A mentee often cancelling appointments
- A mentee failing to complete actions/tasks as agreed
- A mentor not being sensitive to a mentees' needs, e.g. imposing their own agenda or relitigating their own past battles rather than listening to the concerns of the mentee
- A mentor and mentee not getting on
- Breaking confidentiality

Some of these issues may be solved by first sharing your concerns with the mentor/mentee and then discussing frankly how they might be resolved.

Both mentor and mentee have the option of ending the relationship at any time, but this should be considered carefully and thoughtfully. You need to determine logically and quietly whether the mentoring relationship can be saved, whether it is worth saving, and whether the time, energy and emotional costs will result in a win-win situation. This is not easy but through talking with the mentee and the lead of the Mentoring Scheme (Prof Sam Gilbert: [sam.gilbert@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:sam.gilbert@ucl.ac.uk)) you should be able to reach a satisfactory conclusion.



## Code of Conduct

1. The mentor's role is to respond to the Mentee's needs and agenda; it is not to impose their own agenda
2. Mentors must respect the mentee's right to confidentiality
3. The mentor and mentee should be aware of procedures for resolving difficulties
4. Mentors and mentees should respect each other's time and other responsibilities, ensuring they do not impose expectations that are beyond what is reasonable
5. Either party may dissolve the relationship
6. The mentor will not intrude into areas the mentee wishes to keep private until invited to do so
7. Mentors and mentees should aim to be open and truthful with each other and themselves about expectations concerning the relationship
8. Mentors and mentees should review the mentoring relationship at agreed intervals to assess how it might be made more effective
9. Mentors and mentees should contact the lead of the scheme (Prof Sam Gilbert: [sam.gilbert@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:sam.gilbert@ucl.ac.uk)) if they have any concerns

# Mentoring Agreement – Guidelines for the mentoring relationship

Making a mentoring agreement about the way you will work together is a simple way to be clear about the purpose, boundaries and limitations of the mentoring relationship.

You may wish to agree with each other

1. The broad areas, which you are both comfortable with, as the focus for mentoring. In doing this it can be helpful to agree
  - Whether you will bring personal issues
  - How to keep clear about what sort of issues are the matters for line manager discussions and what sorts of issues belong to the mentoring relationship
  - What confidentiality means in this context – are there any limits to it?
  
2. How you will keep in contact
  - How often you anticipate needing to meet
  - If you prefer to meet in person, via Zoom/Teams, or telephone
  - If it is acceptable for the mentee to contact the mentor between scheduled meetings

The following is intended as a guideline/template which you can adjust to fit your situation.

## ***The Process:***

- Before your first meeting the mentee should review the Mentoring Agreement form (see next page) and consider the topics he/she would like to discuss.
- At the meeting, both mentor and mentee should complete, sign and date the form.
- Both mentor and mentee should keep a copy of the form.
- After the meeting, the mentor should email the Mentoring Scheme Lead (Prof Sam Gilbert: [sam.gilbert@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:sam.gilbert@ucl.ac.uk)) to confirm that the meeting took place.

## ***Mentoring Agreement***

The mentee would like to discuss the following topics:	
How often will you meet?	
What is the date of your next meeting?	
Where will you meet?	
Any additional area/issues you want to discuss and agree to?	
This document will be retained exclusively by the mentor and mentee	

We both agree that the content of these meetings will be treated confidentially.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mentee Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mentor Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## Examples of mentoring questions

These are examples of questions mentors may use to increase a mentee's self-awareness of the situation. These questions can help improve communication and understanding.

### Identification of issue:

- What do you make of \_\_\_\_\_?
- How do you feel about \_\_\_\_\_?
- What concerns you the most about \_\_\_\_\_?
- What seems to be your main obstacle?
- What is holding you back from \_\_\_\_\_?

### Further information:

- What do you mean by \_\_\_\_\_?
- Tell me more about it.
- What else?
- What have you tried so far?
- What will you have to do to get the job done?
- What support do you need to accomplish \_\_\_\_\_?

### Hypothetical:

- If you could do it over again what would you do differently?
- If you could do this any way you wanted, what would you do?

### Outcomes:

- How do you want \_\_\_\_\_ to turn out?
- What do you want?
- What is your desired outcome?

### Planning:

- What do you plan to do about it?
- What kind of plan do you need to create to accomplish \_\_\_\_\_?
- How do you suppose you could improve the situation?

**In relation to:**

If you do this, how will it affect \_\_\_\_\_ ?

How does this affect \_\_\_\_\_ ?

What else do you need to consider?

**Taking Action:**

What will you do? When will you do it?

How will I know you did it?

What are your next steps?

## Useful Links

UCL Mentoring Guidance <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/human-resources/organisational-development/coaching-mentoring-and-team-development/mentoring>

PaLS Equality, Diversity and Inclusion website <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/pals/about-us/equality-diversity-and-inclusion-edi>

UCL Academic Promotions Guidance <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/human-resources/policies-advice/academic-careers-framework-and-promotions-processes/academic-promotions-guidance>

UCL HR Policies and Procedures <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/human-resources/policies-procedures-and-advice>

UCL Let's Talk about Race <https://report-support.ucl.ac.uk/campaigns/lets-talk-about-race>

Information about work-life balance, parental leave policy, family friendly benefits, employee assistance programme

<https://www.ucl.ac.uk/ion/working-institute/staff-benefits-and-wellbeing>

UCL Student Support and Wellbeing <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/srs/our-services/student-support-and-wellbeing>

UCL Report + Support <https://report-support.ucl.ac.uk>

UCL Complaints Procedures <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/hr/docs/grievance.php>

UCL's equality networks, including:

- Enable@UCL: <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/human-resources/equality-diversity-inclusion-committees-and-networks/enableucl>

- RaceMatters@UCL: <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/human-resources/equality-diversity-inclusion-committees-and-networks/racemattersucl>
- Out@UCL: <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/human-resources/equality-diversity-inclusion-committees-and-networks/outucl>
- Parents and Carers Together (PACT): <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/human-resources/equality-diversity-inclusion-committees-and-networks/parents-and-carers-together>
- Gender Equality Network: <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/human-resources/equality-diversity-inclusion-committees-and-networks/gender-equality-network>
- UCL Menopause Network: <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/human-resources/equality-diversity-inclusion-committees-and-networks/ucl-menopause-network>
- Interfaith Forum: <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/human-resources/equality-diversity-inclusion-committees-and-networks/interfaith-ucl>
- Neurodivergent Staff Network: <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/human-resources/equality-diversity-inclusion-committees-and-networks/neurodivergent-staff-network>
- UCL Trans Network: <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/human-resources/equality-diversity-inclusion-committees-and-networks/ucl-trans-network>
- LGBTQ+ STEM @UCL Network: <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/human-resources/equality-diversity-inclusion-committees-and-networks/lgbtq-stem-ucl-network>

# Thank you!

for being part of the PaLS Mentoring Scheme