

STUDENT MENTORING PROGRAMME



School of Biological Science Mentoring Programme

The School of Biological Sciences is a busy, multidisciplinary community. Spanning everything from agricultural technology to zoology. The School has approximately 1000 students broadly covering food security, microbiology, ecosystem biology to sustainability.

Work Related Learning (WRL) is an important part of university life, it enhances students' understanding of the world of work; themselves and their potential work environments. As a result, students are further empowered to enter and succeed in graduate job markets; the world of work and their wider lives.

Over the years we have developed a very successful work placement programme and want to add to the opportunities to connect students with industry professionals.

As part of our WRL offerings the Biological Sciences will deliver a mentoring programme in 2023/24 with the aim of a mentoring cohort being launched yearly.

This booklet has been developed to provide you with information on the mentoring program and provides some resource to assist you in developing a successful mentoring relationship

WHAT IS MENTORING

Mentoring is a great opportunity for students to gain real insight as to what career options are open to them and it is a rewarding experience for industry professionals to help someone progress and achieve their full potential in their future career.

The aim of this programme is to help current School of Biological Sciences students engage with professionals. We want to provide you with a supported framework to think about the career options open to you and help understand the skills developed as well as the skills they need to develop. *This is very much personal development opposed to academic guidance or career advice.*



IMPROVE
DEVELOP
TRAINING
MOTIVATE
COACHING
INSPIRE

HOW IT WORKS

We will establish and manage a bank of experienced mentors who will be made available to those seeking help in the following areas:

- Enhancing practical skills and getting advice on career advancement
- Identifying and applying for opportunities that will aid skills development
- Building networks
- Increase career confidence

Students wishing to have support from the mentoring bank will apply and once approved will be allocated a suitable mentor.

Each mentee will be eligible to:

- 4 sessions with a mentor
- Attend 1 training seminar
- Receive monthly newsletters
- Attend networking events
- Complete a reflective evaluation and attend a celebratory event

Mentoring is a powerful personal development and empowerment tool. It can help the mentee gain a better understanding of what they want to do as a career.

It should be driven primarily by the mentee, with the mentor supporting and enabling them to take responsibility for their own development. In this the mentor acts as a guide, supporter, sounding board and, sometimes, as a role model.

BENEFITS OF BECOMING A MENTEE

- Increased confidence and performance
- The opportunity to learn from a role model
- A broader perspective
- Explore possible solutions
- Help in clarifying and setting development goals
- Expanded network
- A safe environment to test out ideas and suggestions



MENTORING RELATIONSHIP / AGREEMENT

It is recommended that the mentoring relationship is based on shared expectation about what each can expect of the other. The best way to ensure that the relationship runs smoothly is to discuss and agree some ground rules and expectations, which can help to keep the process focused.

WHAT ARE THE EXPECTATIONS OF A MENTEE?

- Commit to the programme and engage with their mentor
- Liaise and arrange meetings with their mentor
- Be open and honest around goals, expectations, challenges and concerns
- Respect the confidential and trusting environment
- Seek advice, opinion, feedback, and direction from their mentor
- Be open to constructive criticism/feedback and ask for it
- Come to meetings prepared with a clear idea of what topics or issues they want to address
- Respect the mentor's time and resources
- Apply what is learnt from your meetings back on the job

POTENTIAL ENGAGEMENT TOPICS

- CAREER DEVELOPMENT
- PRESENTATIONS AND PUBLIC SPEAKING
 - BUSINESS START-UP
 - BUILDING NETWORKS
- RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING
- INCREASING CAREER AND BUSINESS CONFIDENCE
 - RESILIENCE
 - PROBLEM SOLVING
- SOMEONE TO SUPPORT ME
- ORGANISATION AND PLANNING
 - PROFILE AND VISIBILITY
 - INTERVIEWS AND PITCHES

HOW DO I BECOME A MENTEE

This programme is available to current QUB students studying within the School of Biological Sciences.

We are looking for students who would like help with career progression and 1 – 1 support in achieving their full potential from an experienced mentor.

You can apply by completing the mentoring application form [HERE](#) or contact Dionne Alexander d.alexander@qub.ac.uk

PROGRAMME STRUCTURE

1. Apply to become a mentee (October)
2. Receive notification on outcome of application
3. Successful applicants will be invited to attend a mandatory mentee induction session (you will have the opportunity to attend in person or online)
4. Receive Mentoring Toolkit, code of conduct and acceptance form to review and help prepare for meeting your mentee
5. Receive 'It's a Match' details, introducing you to your mentor. Mentoring relationship begins in November and ends in April
6. Receive monthly newsletters which includes updates, mentoring resources, invites to events, evaluations



CONCLUDING THE PROGRAMME

- **Concluding the mentorship**
At the end of the programme the Careers and Placement team will send an email to conclude the programme and seek feedback and evaluations from mentors and mentees.
- **Conclusion Event**
There will be an opportunity at the end of the programme to attend a conclusion and celebratory event of all mentors and mentees.
- **Continued Engagement**
We absolutely encourage mentor and mentee to keep in contact. There is no obligation to do so and this may be something you wish to confirm with the mentee at the end.



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FAQ'S

- **How was my mentee/mentor matched to me?**

Mentees and mentors are matched based on the information provided in their application forms.

- **How much of my time will this take?**

This very much depends on each pairing. It is entirely both parties' choice as to how frequently you meet and for how often. We recommended that this is discussed, and some guidelines are set out at the first meeting. However, we have allocated each mentee 4 mentoring sessions.

- **When does the programme start and end?**

The mentoring sessions will begin in November and finish at the end of April.

- **What happens if we don't get on?**

There is a chance that some of the suggested matches will not work in practice, and this will probably be apparent quite quickly. It is worth bearing in mind that a mentoring relationship is designed to challenge you and make you think differently about yourself and your approach to things. As a result, there could well be points during your meetings where you feel moved outside your comfort zone. In retrospect, this could well be when you gain the most from the scheme.

However, if there is a more permanent and fundamental 'mis-match' please let us know



FAQS

- **How confidential is the programme?**

What you discuss with your mentor is strictly confidential between the two of you, and this confidentiality is maintained even after the relationship has ended. The only exception to this is if a mentee discloses a risk to themselves or others - where immediate contact / signposting to Queen's Student Wellbeing Service is required

- **I've lost touch with my mentee/ mentor, what do I do?**

These things happen, don't worry just reach out and you can pick up from where you left off. Please contact ahssdevevoffice@qub.ac.uk if you do not hear back from your mentee/mentor.

- **Will there be an evaluation of the programme?**

Yes we will ask you to complete an evaluation at the end of the programme.

CONTACT

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