



MENTORING APPRENTICES/ TRAINEES



This booklet has been produced by the Training Safe ULF project to support apprentices and trainees with mentors in the workplace

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Mentoring Apprentices and Trainees

Introduction

This document is based on the fantastic work of the Unite Union Westinghouse Springfields Fuels Apprentice Mentoring Scheme. For many years they have organised a tried and tested Mentoring scheme supporting apprentices through their apprenticeship to their first 6 months in permanent employment.

Apprentices and trainees are an important part of the workforce and for many starting their working life, this is a different environment from what they have been used to in the past. Many will have little or no experience of employment. Whilst we will all face various pressures and concerns throughout our lives, for the apprentices and trainees many will face the pressure of work, family life and financial independence for the first time. Having a mentor they can build trust with, who will take the time to listen to any concerns and worries they may have and help guide them in the right direction will only help progress them in their career, keep them safe and healthy - physically and mentally - at work and provide the right environment to keep them on their apprenticeship and training and forward into working life.

Many organisations provide mentors for the job. This is about mentoring to support the individual with life situations which impact on their training or apprenticeships whilst they are training or at the start of their working lives.

This is a guide to introducing mentoring in your workplace or organisation.

Why Mentoring and what does it involve?

Mentoring is an effective way of helping people to progress in their careers or organisation and is becoming increasingly important. It is a partnership between two people (mentor and mentee), normally working in a similar field or sharing similar experiences.

A mentor is a guide who can help the mentee find the right direction and develop solutions to career or organisation issues. Mentors rely upon having had similar experiences to gain an empathy with the mentee and an understanding of their issues. Mentors often have many work experiences that the mentee will not have had and can pass on what they have learnt from them. Mentoring provides the mentee with an opportunity to think about their progress into work.

Mentors can be a wise counsel, help a new employee orientate into the workplace, provide information, advice and guidance relating to the learning and training aspects of the apprenticeship or training, and work with the apprentice or trainee and employer to ensure that problems are resolved quickly and do not threaten the apprenticeship or training.

Mentoring is particularly important for those at the beginning of their working lives; for young people who are inexperienced entering the workplace for the first time. The mentor

relationship provides additional support and guidance, which is removed from the direct line management chain, including for employment rights at work and health and safety.

A mentor should be someone outside the apprentice's reporting hierarchy and disciplinary structures at work. A union learning rep or workplace rep is often well placed to mentor apprentices. It is also essential that issues between mentor and mentee are confidential. All mentors should sign a mentoring agreement after undergoing training.

An employer considering taking on apprentices or trainees should provide mentors and then ensure they are trained and there is time off for mentors within the organisation. Ideally a mentor should be a member of the union or a union rep. Union reps often have training and experience of mentoring-type skills through their union role.

Checklist: what needs to be done to support mentoring of Apprentices or Trainees.

1. Produce a clear policy and structure including:
 - a. Appoint senior Mentor lead
 - b. Appointment and training of agreed numbers of mentors
 - c. Reporting and recording of mentor/mentee meetings
 - d. Reporting and recording of safeguarding issues including responsible persons to contact
 - e. Allocation of mentors to mentees
 - f. Location and financing of meetings between mentors and mentees
 - g. Initial training, monitoring and review of procedure and practice including value of process
 - h. Training of management about the value of mentoring and need for release and support of mentors and mentees.
2. Produce templates:
 - a. Mentor appointment contract/agreement - see Appendix A
 - b. Initial mentee interest/hobby list - see Appendix B
 - c. Record of mentor/mentee meeting - see Appendix C
3. Write and agree safeguarding policy (your company should already have a policy) - see Appendix D
4. Produce list of agreed contacts for different issues - see Appendix E

What makes a good mentor?

Someone who:

- is an active listener
- doesn't judge
- has empathy with the mentee
- can be trusted
- offers support and guidance
- can be relied upon
- understands the role and pressures mentees come under at work and at home

Remember - Listen, don't judge!

What is the Mentoring Process?

1. Introduction:

- Speak to the apprentices or trainees during their induction fortnight or when they first join the company.
- Senior rep or equivalent should deliver the introduction by speaking to the apprentices or trainees during their induction fortnight when they first join the organisation or start on their training or apprenticeship.
- Explain what a mentor does and how this process could help them through their training or apprenticeship.
- Give the mentee a mentoring booklet.

2. Meet the Mentors:

- An informal meeting should be set up between mentors and mentees.
- They should be paired up after the mentee completes the questionnaire.
- This pairing may not be the final pairing.
- A mentee can ask for a different mentor at any time.
- Ideally the mentor should remain with the mentee for the entire length of apprenticeship or training and for 6 months after the apprenticeship or training ends.
- After each meeting the mentor asks the mentee to sign a document of meeting and this is submitted to the senior rep to record the meeting has taken place. It also records any issues that the mentee wants raising or anything that needs to be recorded and raised because it is a safeguarding issue.

Remember - a mentor is not a counsellor!

What about the meetings?

- Meetings between mentor and mentee should be monthly
- Mentors should arrange the meeting
- Supervisors/line managers should be aware of the meeting
- Meetings should take place in normal working hours and on site
- Arrange to meet in a place where both mentor and mentee feel comfortable and the conversation will not be readily overheard. This should be in a public space, do not use rooms where there is only the mentor or mentee in the room.
- Let the mentee lead the conversation
- If issues are raised, can the mentee resolve them themselves? The mentee should be guided in the right direction instead of solving the issue for them.
- The meeting may just an informal chat.
- These meetings are confidential and should not be discussed with anyone else, unless issues raised involve subjects covered by safeguarding policy.
- Focus on the mentee and don't be distracted by mobile phones or others around you.

During the meeting

- At the first 1:1 meeting:
- Mentor should introduce themselves and talk about their work background
- Remind the mentee what the mentor role is
- Talk about the confidentiality of the meetings
- Mentor and mentee should discuss their hobbies and interests
- Mentor should explain the paperwork and why it's needed.
- Mentor and mentee should discuss work patterns and arrange best times to meet in the future.
- Mentor should explain that if the mentee can't get in touch with them for whatever reason they can always contact the senior rep who will help them
- Some of the issues that might be talked about:
 - Outside activities
 - Work placements and the people the mentee are working with
 - Family
 - College/training
 - Money
 - Relationships
 - Personal issues
- There may be issues that the mentor can't help with, because they have no experience or it falls outside their remit. Either get permission from the mentee to seek advice from within the workplace organisation or the trade union organisation, or signpost the mentee towards some external support.

After the meeting

Remind the apprentice that if they need to have a chat about something important, they don't have to wait until the next time you're due to meet up.

Complete the 'apprentice mentoring meeting' form and hand a copy to the apprentice reminding them to return it to the union office.

Mentors must

Always:

- stay calm and never get physical
- be impartial, don't judge
- listen
- get the facts
- adjourn if needed
- recap
- use correct body language

Never:

- Get physical
- Rush
- Be dismissive
- Take over
- Be distracted
- Break confidence

Remember - Confidentiality is Key

Code of Conduct for Mentors

Do:

- Treat all young people/vulnerable adults equally - show no favouritism
- Plan activities that involve more than one other person being present, or at least are within sight and hearing of others, including windows
- Respect right to privacy
- Avoid being drawn into inappropriate attention seeking behaviour
- Remember someone else might misinterpret your actions, no matter how well-intentioned
- Avoid physical contact
- Avoid close personal relationships with the mentee
- Avoid inappropriate language, writing, phoning, email or internet
- Ensure any allegations, suspicions, or concerns of abuse are reported as soon as possible
- Ensure any abusive peer activities are challenged
- Encourage and empower the young person or vulnerable adults to do things for themselves

Remember - Look after yourself and remember Safeguarding

Mentor appointment contract/agreement

I understand that as a trained mentor there are responsibilities required to carry out this role. That:

- 1:1 meetings with the mentee should take place at work during normal working hours
- I have read and am aware of the Safeguarding Policy and Procedure
- The discussion which takes place is confidential and should not be discussed with anyone else, unless the issue raised relates to the Safeguarding Policy and Procedure. If any guidance is required, only the Senior Mentor Lead should be contacted.
- Failure to follow this agreement may result in suspension of the role.

This agreement has been agreed and supported by management and trade unions.

Signed:

Date:

Appendix B

Initial mentee interest/hobby list

All apprentice mentors have taken training to allow them to take on the role. If you're happy with your mentor, you'll stay with them throughout your apprenticeship/training. To help us pair you up it would be useful if we know a little about you, nothing personal, just what you do in your spare time and it may be useful for us to know if there is anything you really don't like.

Name:

Interests / Hobbies (sports, outdoors, arts, crafts, music etc):

Dislikes (Sports, outdoors, arts, crafts, music etc.):

Contact telephone number:

Appendix C

Record of mentor/mentee meeting

Part A

Date, Time Meeting:

Location:

Mentor's Name:

Mentee's Name:

Issues Raised (Optional):

Does anything need to become formal?

Signed by Mentor

Signed by Mentee

Part B

To be completed by the Mentee once Part A is complete

Are you happy with what is recorded? Yes / No / Any comments

Are you happy with your mentor? Yes / No / Any comments

Any further comments

Signed by Mentee

Please return form to:

Safeguarding

There is a statutory and moral duty to promote and safeguard the welfare of young people under the age of 18 and vulnerable adults. This includes helping to protect them from situations which may lead to abuse.

There is a statutory duty under the Children Act 2004 and Section 114 of the Learning and Skills Act 2000, to safeguard and promote the welfare of its young people. In fulfilling this duty regard has been taken of the guidance in 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' DfES 2006, and 'Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education' DfES2007. Under the legislation a child is classed as a person under the age of 18, and a vulnerable adult is by reason of 'mental or other disability, age or illness and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation'.

It is a criminal offence under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 for a person over the age of 18 in a position of trust to enter into a sexual relationship with any young person under 18 years old, even if the relationship is consensual.

Any suspected cases of abuse must be investigated by the proper authorities and importantly internal individual or line manager investigation must not take place. If a young person/vulnerable adult tells a mentor that abuse is taking place they should be acknowledged, taken seriously and listened to. However, under NO circumstances shall the employee progress into an investigation but referred to the agreed authorities as soon as possible. There is a legal obligation to progress this information, and therefore there cannot be any confidentiality issues between the mentor or mentee about this.

It is important not to ask questions and under NO circumstances investigate any accusations. All factual details of any discussion must be recorded including the date, time of disclosure, the place where the alleged abuse happened, the name of the person/s to which the disclosure has been made, the name of the complainant and where different the name of the young person/vulnerable adult who has allegedly been abused, a description of any injuries that have been observed and the account that was given of the allegation. NO further action must be taken by the mentor apart from passing this information to the agreed authority.

What constitutes abuse:

Physical abuse including hitting, throwing, shaking

Sexual Abuse - encouraging them to behave in sexually inappropriate ways

Emotional Abuse - conveying they are worthless or inadequate, causing them to feel frightened or in danger

Neglect - the persistent failure to meet physical and psychological needs, failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment

Forced Marriage - to force a person to marry someone against their will is an abuse and criminal offence.

Appendix E

Contact Numbers of Senior Mentor Lead and other internal contacts

Trade Union Convenor / Senior Trade Union Representative:

Senior Mentor Lead:

Contacts in the organisation:

HR:

Finance:

Occupational Health:

Other:

Important advice and telephone numbers to share:

Alcohol abuse: 0800 917 8282 www.drinkaware.co.uk

Citizens Advice Bureau 08444 111444

Community Legal Advice 0845 345 4345 www.communitylegaladvice.org.uk

Consumer Direct 08454 040506 www.consumerdirect.gov.uk

National debt helpline 0808808 4000 www.nationaldebtline.co.uk

NHS Direct: 0845 4647 www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk

NHS Smoking helpline 0800 022 4322 www.smokefree.nhs.uk

The Law Society: www.lawsociety.org.uk/home.law

Payplan: free debt help organisation 0800 716239 www.payplan.com

Relate: for relationship problems 0300 100 1234 www.relate.org.uk

Samaritans - 24 hour national helpline 08457 909090 www.samaritans.org.uk

Trading Standards www.tradingstandards.gov.uk

Victim Support Helpline 0845 3030900 www.victimsupport.org.uk



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