The University of Sheffield (TUoS) Mentoring Network: Code of Practice for Mentoring Programmes

Preface

This code of practice has been collaboratively produced by the TUoS Mentoring Network.

The code draws on the professional competency frameworks and ethical practice codes of the professional bodies: the European Mentoring & Coaching Council, and the Association for Coaching.

It is intended to be used by TUoS staff who are responsible for designing and providing leadership for mentoring programmes or schemes – referred to as 'Managers'.

It outlines some programme-level considerations, that we hope will be useful to people who are moving from being a mentor to managing a programme, or to those developing and managing the practice of groups of mentors.

We, the network, recognise the diversity of our mentor and mentee groups, and our structures and timeframes, so the principles we outline below are intended to encourage ethical practice that is broad and applicable to all mentoring programmes and schemes at TUoS.

We are happy for this code to be used and adapted by mentoring programme leaders outside TUoS, please just attribute and credit our work.

If you have any questions about this code, its use, or its content, please contact Dr Kay Guccione (k.guccione@sheffield.ac.uk), Chair of the TUoS Mentoring Network.

The Code

Mentoring Programmes at the University of Sheffield should offer:

- **Clarity that supports informed choice for participants, both mentors and mentees**. Managers should explicitly communicate their programmes' eligibility criteria, application and selection processes, aims, objectives, any organisational expectations for participants, and whether there are any internal or external programme sponsors. They should offer mentor and mentee role descriptions, programme timelines, and expected time commitment from the outset. Where there are links to other university systems e.g. credit bearing components, links to appraisal, probation or promotion processes, these should be made clear. Managers should support participant choice to leave a programme, as well as their choice to participate.
- **Mentor development activities that cultivate a 'Coaching' (non-directive) approach**. Managers should ensure that their model of mentoring doesn't rely solely on an 'advice giving' model and allows each mentor to develop their own individual Coaching practice, as appropriate for the needs of the programme and of each mentee.
- **A mentoring 'Contracting' process**. Managers should provide materials that enable new mentoring partnerships to discuss and agree matters of confidentiality, mentoring

dynamics and parameters, set clear goals and objectives, monitor progress, and signposts key policies and contacts.

- **Flagging and signposting.** Managers should provide materials before mentoring commences, that clearly indicate to all participants how they can seek support should a mentoring situation make them feel uncomfortable or worried. Managers should take responsibility for the matches they have made, and be prepared to intervene positively to resolve/dissolve a mismatched partnership. Signposting to other key staff or student support services should be provided before mentoring commences.
- **Mentor development activities that are aligned to other key frameworks for HE learning or professional practice as appropriate** e.g. UKPSF, HEAR, the Researcher Development Framework, development frameworks from professional bodies and societies. Managers should facilitate an integrated approach to academic practice/career development/academic progress, as appropriate.
- **Mechanisms for ongoing mentoring practice development**. Managers should offer Mentor CPD workshops, online learning, peer-networks, and/or practice supervision, as appropriate for the needs of the mentor group.
- **Aligned programme principles and mentor development**. Managers should allow mentors to move freely between programmes where appropriate should they choose, and without requiring extensive retraining.
- **Recognition that mentoring is very commonly delivered as unpaid work.** Managers should develop an awareness that trust and respect are at the core of managing volunteer work and take steps to mitigate the over-burden of individuals, especially those in minority/marginalised groups e.g. women, BAME staff and students, LGBTQ+ staff and students, and recognise where intersectionality can exacerbate high demand for unpaid work. Managers should recognise and celebrate the emotional work and good citizenship of mentors in their programmes.
- **A commitment to evaluation that allows participants to report their experience as well as outcome metrics.** Managers should ensure that data is used to inform continuous programme improvement, to contribute to organisational learning, and to illustrate likely outcomes and experiences to potential participants. Data should only be collected and shared with participant consent and in line with GDPR legalities. Reporting of data should be in anonymised aggregated form, unless otherwise consented.
- **An exemplary commitment to Inclusivity, Equality and Diversity.** Managers should strive to ensure that their programme design, timing, location, or culture is not exclusive to any staff groups, engage underrepresented groups, and ensure that every participant feels valued and included.
- **Comply with all organisational-level policies.** Including the [Student Commitment](), PGR [Code of Practice](), and [Staff Policies]().
- **Uphold the reputation of the mentoring profession as a specialist educational practice.**