



NATIONAL UNIVERSITY MENTORING STANDARDS

ABSTRACT

The international standards for accrediting good mentoring practice in universities.



Introduction

Welcome to the National University Mentoring Standards, an international scheme to accredit universities who meet or good mentoring practice.

In any higher education institute there are a variety of mentoring and peer mentoring programmes running at any particular time, staff to staff, staff to students, students to staff or students to students. However, for those setting up or running these programmes there has been no guidance to ensure the psychological safety, the operation and training of these programmes. This is why these standards were written and are necessary.

These standards have been developed based on decades of experience in running successful mentoring programmes, training mentors and research study within the mentoring industry. This has been combined with the outcomes of published research and feedback from both mentors and mentees to produce these evidence-based standards over the last two years.

There are seven pillars to the standards published in this document:

1. Aims
2. Training
3. Support
4. Administration
5. Awareness
6. Diversity and Inclusion
7. Celebration

These standards allow universities to gain accreditation and recognition for their mentoring programmes, or if all of their programmes are run to the same framework or standard, then a university-wide accreditation can be applied for. Details follow on the next page.

Thank you for the work you do with your mentoring programme, you join many thousands of mentors making a great difference to others. We look forward to awarding your programme the recognition it deserves.



Accreditation

Accreditation

Accreditation of the National University Mentoring Standards is awarded by National Mentoring Day and the Mentoring School and lasts for one year.

National recognition and accreditation of your mentoring programme will provide:

- Certification
- Digital logo for your use
- Listing on the national standards website
- Promotion on social media
- Opportunity to submit case studies to promote your work.

Accreditation Prices

	Single programme	Up to 5 programmes	Up to 10 programmes	Up to 50 programmes
Initial assessment at any level (Bronze, Silver, Gold)	£350	£1,000	£1,500	£2,500
Reaccreditation at the same level	£175	£500	£750	£1,250

If you have more than 50 programmes or for large programmes with more than 50 mentors, please contact us for tailored costs.

A mentoring programme is defined as a programme of fewer than 50 mentors set up for a single purpose. For example, an organisation offering peer, reverse and career mentoring (even under the same management) would be classed as 3 programmes.

Programmes must be established at the time of application and represented in the application – we cannot accredit a programme that has not been started.

All new applicants are required to complete six months at Bronze level before being able to apply for Silver to evidence improvements/impact. Organisations cannot go from Bronze to Gold and must spend at least six months at Silver.

Prices exclude VAT.

Accreditation Process

The accreditation process is a simple one. Universities register on the accreditation site <https://nationalmentoringstandards.com> and are able to rate themselves against the criteria in the seven pillars. Links to the evidence are uploaded against each.

We then check the self-rating against the submission and evidence. Judgements are based on best fit, for example if a submission meets most of the criteria in a level, then this will be awarded. The overall judgement will require at least six of the seven pillars to be scored at that level or higher, for example to be accredited at silver level, at least six of the pillars must be rated as silver or gold.

Quality Assurance

In order to quality assure the process and ensure best practice is embedded, programmes are required to remain at each stage for six months before progressing to the next level and cannot progress from Bronze to Gold in one step.

New applicants will need to meet the Bronze standards and hold that level for at least six months before being able to progress.

National Mentoring Day and the Mentoring School will only officially recognise university mentoring programmes that have achieved at least Bronze accreditation.

Assessment Outcomes

The assessor will award an outcome for each pillar and the overall accreditation. These cannot be appealed against, however the assessor will contact the applicant prior to this to request more evidence if a criteria does not meet the threshold.

Accreditation applies for single mentoring programmes, unless there is a combined approach and shared expectations across several mentoring programmes, for example those being run in the same department by one coordinator.

Reaccreditation Process

Rather than submit an entire application, applications for reaccreditation at the same level only need to evidence continuation of provision. Applicants seeking to change level will need to submit a full application.

Training

If required we are able to provide curricula or pre-recorded online training for each of the levels of standard, please see the website for more details. For larger cohorts of mentors or specific accredited training requirements, please contact hello@thementoringschool.com with your requirements.

Pillar 1 – Aims

Bronze	Silver <i>(as Bronze, but also...)</i>	Gold <i>(as Silver and Bronze, but also...)</i>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The programme has a clear purpose, objective or aim(s). 2. Literature or websites clearly communicate the purpose, objective or aim(s). 3. The programme inspires, motivates or introduces career pathways*. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Feedback is collected and analysed from mentees on the outcomes of the programme against the aim(s). 5. The programme facilitates career discussions and career exploration* to take place. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Feedback is collected from mentors on the mentoring programme. 7. Analysis of feedback is used to improve the outcomes of the programme. 8. The programme facilitates career pathways¹, providing/ showing accessibility options, advice, guidance or opportunities.
Evidence examples <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Screenshots • PowerPoints • Leaflets • Adverts 	Evidence examples <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data analysis • Report 	Evidence examples <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data analysis • Report • Action plan • Evaluation or review document

¹ career can refer to study choices as a student, exit from university, long-term career, or staff progression/career development.

Pillar 2 – Training

Bronze	Silver <i>(as Bronze, but also...)</i>	Gold <i>(as Silver and Bronze, but also...)</i>
<p>Training for staff and student mentors</p> <p>1. There is training provided for mentors covering:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helping mentees to trust them and feel safe in mentoring sessions • Structuring mentoring conversations • Safeguarding protocol • Boundaries, communication with mentees and confidentiality • Supporting overwhelmed mentees • Support available for mentors • Ending mentoring relationships • Signposting mentees to appropriate services • Role and responsibilities within the programme. 	<p>Training for staff and student mentors</p> <p>2. Training also includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content on different mentoring approaches (e.g. technical or pastoral mentoring) • Looking after yourself as a mentor (e.g. overwhelm, switching off, dealing with complex cases) • Mentoring activities they could use • Record keeping/note taking • Selecting appropriate services to signpost mentees to. 	<p>Training for staff and student mentors</p> <p>3. A mentor's skills after training is assessed by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • completion of a written portfolio demonstrating application of skills; or • completion of a qualification; or • observation of mentoring session; or • written assessment; or • another suitable method.
<p>Evidence examples</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training plans • Presentations 	<p>Evidence examples</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training plans • Presentations 	<p>Evidence examples</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sample assessment materials • Outcomes of assessments • Sample completed assessment • Qualification evidence

Pillar 3 – Support

Bronze	Silver <i>(as Bronze, but also...)</i>	Gold <i>(as Silver and Bronze, but also...)</i>
<p>Mentors</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Mentors have access to support for their wellbeing. There are developmental activities undertaken on a regular basis for mentors (at least annually). <p>Mentees</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Mentees can access information that helps them understand the purpose and potential outcomes of mentoring. 	<p>Mentors</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> There is a form of regular supervision¹ for mentors. Mentors can access self-study continuing professional development activities, training or professional development activities or other ways to upskill/develop key mentoring skills. Written guidance and/or resources are/is available for the mentor on how to get the best out of mentoring for themselves and the mentee. <p>Mentees</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> There is a clear complaints procedure. FAQs, induction, online training or guidance is available for the mentee on how to get the best out of the mentoring. 	<p>Mentors</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> There is an alumni network, who support current mentors. Mentors are able to network with other current mentors (including from other mentoring programmes)². <p>Mentees</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Mentees attend a training session/course, event, webinar or receive written guidance on expectations and how to maximise the mentoring opportunity. Mentees have the opportunity or option to swap mentors to best suit their needs.
<p>Evidence examples</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leaflets Screenshots Websites Procedures/policies Handbook Guidance 	<p>Evidence examples</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leaflets Screenshots Websites Procedures/policies Handbook Guidance Presentations 	<p>Evidence examples</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leaflets Screenshots Websites Procedures/policies Handbook Guidance Training plans Presentations

¹ Supervision may be peer-to-peer or staff-to-mentor.

² This can be via online networking, social media or other.

Pillar 4 – Administration

Bronze	Silver <i>(as Bronze, but also...)</i>	Gold <i>(as Silver and Bronze, but also...)</i>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Programme has clear sign up and application process. 2. Complaints procedures or policy are in place. 3. Professional conduct requirements are explained and expected (e.g. lateness, cancellation or behaviour). 4. Operational plan, strategy, communication plan, delivery methods or procedures are in place (covering as a minimum Health & Safety guidelines and or wellbeing). 5. Management guidelines are in place including data management and privacy. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Mentees and prospective mentees can access information on the application/induction/mentoring process. 7. The complaints process is clearly documented and available. 8. Mentor's performance is reviewed through outcomes and feedback. 9. There is a written code of conduct for mentors¹. 10. Staff are in place to provide supervision and to oversee the programme. 11. The programme allows mentors and mentees to be matched. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 13. Prospective mentees are able to discuss application process or mentee matching (can be online or offline). 14. There is a mechanism in place for dealing with both verbal and written complaints. 15. Performance of mentors is periodically reviewed/monitored or discussion or reviews take place to achieve best practice. 16. Risk assessment and control mechanisms to protect the mentors and mentees have been carried out or are in place. 17. There is a mentoring manager in place. 18. There is clear criteria for matching mentors and mentees, which includes self-selection and/or trial sessions. 19. The programme encourages new ways to improve the process, administration or

		provision of mentoring.
Evidence examples <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaflets • Screenshots • Websites • Procedures/policies • Handbook • Guidance 	Evidence examples <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaflets • Screenshots • Websites • Procedures/policies • Handbook • Guidance • Forms 	Evidence examples <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaflets • Screenshots • Websites • Procedures/policies • Handbook • Guidance • Forms

¹ A sample code of conduct is available on the National Mentoring Day website.

Pillar 5 –Awareness

Bronze	Silver <i>(as Bronze, but also...)</i>	Gold <i>(as Silver and Bronze, but also...)</i>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Details of and about the mentoring programme are published and include dates, closing date and clear registration/sign up and contact details. 2. Webpages and documents are kept up to date. 3. The programme raises awareness of the positive benefits and impact of mentoring. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Effective marketing is in place to ensure all mentee and mentor places are filled. 5. The programme champions mentoring within the wider University. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Results/outcome/ successes are published, shared or made available (online or offline). 7. There is accessibility to mentoring information, resources, literature or training.
Evidence examples <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Screenshots • Leaflets 	Evidence examples <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Screenshots • Emails • Leaflets • Mailshots • Social media 	Evidence examples <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Screenshots • Emails • Leaflets • Mailshots • Social media

Pillar 6 – Diversity and Inclusion

Bronze	Silver <i>(as Bronze, but also...)</i>	Gold <i>(as Silver and Bronze, but also...)</i>
1. The programme is open to a diverse cross-section of students.	2. The programme represents an appropriate range of ethnicities, minorities, cultures and abilities depending on the aims of the programme. This should include those with mental or physical health disabilities, including all LGBTQIA+ genders. 3. Mentoring is mentioned in other programmes to reduce inequality, such as Athena SWAN.	4. The programme is made visible and actively encouraged and promoted to the disadvantaged or those at risk of being disadvantaged or falling behind. 5. Mentoring is an integral part of other programmes to reduce inequality, such as Athena SWAN.
Evidence examples <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Screenshots • Emails • Leaflets • Mailshots • Social media 	Evidence examples <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Screenshots • Emails • Leaflets • Mailshots • Social media 	Evidence examples <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Screenshots • Emails • Leaflets • Mailshots • Social media

Pillar 7 - Celebration

Bronze	Silver <i>(as Bronze, but also...)</i>	Gold <i>(as Silver and Bronze, but also...)</i>
1. The work of the mentors, mentoring activities or successes of the mentees is celebrated, particularly in the lead up to National Mentoring Day.	2. Case studies, outcomes, tips or advice are shared. 3. Mentors and mentees are encouraged to celebrate the impact of mentoring.	4. Mentors are recognised for their efforts, credited, praised or thanked for their time and efforts, particularly around National Mentoring Day. 5. Mentees can provide named or anonymous testimonials for the programme.
Evidence examples <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Screenshots • Emails • Leaflets • Mailshots • Social media 	Evidence examples <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Screenshots • Emails • Leaflets • Mailshots • Social media 	Evidence examples <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Screenshots • Emails • Leaflets • Mailshots • Social media • Certificates • Photos



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For further information please visit www.nationalmentoringstandards.com