Mentor Scheme for Early Career Researchers

Induction Session for Mentees & Mentors
## Today’s Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dr Gayle Morris</th>
<th>Welcome, introduction &amp; background</th>
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<tr>
<td>Katrina Newnham</td>
<td>Mentoring – the nuts and bolts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prof Mike McKenna</td>
<td>Mentoring in practice</td>
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</table>
Mentoring
– the nuts and bolts

1. Program purpose and intended benefits
   – Background and strategic purpose
   – Aims

2. The Program
   – Program duration
   – Important dates
   – Support to be provided
   – Evaluation strategy

3. How does mentoring work
   – Roles and responsibilities
   – Learning Types
   – Relationship to day-to-day supervision and the SPDP
   – Setting goals, objectives and boundaries
     • The Mentoring Agreement
     • The Learning Journal
     • Avoiding Stumbling Blocks
     • Trouble Shooting
Victoria University has committed to becoming a university leader defined by its engaged nature and areas of research strength.
Program Purpose

• To provide professional and collegial support for staff in the early stages of a research career to facilitate strategic career planning and career progress.

• To pilot the *Mentoring for VU Researchers Framework* with Early Career Researchers to ensure that the Framework is an appropriate and effective tool for faculties, institutes, centres, service units and schools.
What is Mentoring?

• workplace relationship

• an opportunity to reflect on practice, share professional and personal skills and experiences, and grow professional and personal capabilities

• an exchange of views and ideas

• based upon encouragement, openness, mutual trust, respect and a willingness to learn and share

Section 1 – Purpose, Aims & Benefits
Why ECRs?

Early Career Researchers have moved beyond the close supervisory relationship of PhD students and have not yet reached the confidence or status of established researchers.
Aims of the Program

• Gain University-wide input and support for the pilot
• Ensure the pilot is inclusive of staff in HE, VE and FE areas of the University
• Provide formal recognition and framework for existing ECR mentors
• Celebrate and acknowledge participation and achievement
• Encourage strategic research career planning
• Facilitate career progression of ECR participants
### Program Dates (2010)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>When</th>
<th>Who</th>
<th>What</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>February 18th</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>Kick-start for 2010</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Professional development topic</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 1st</td>
<td>Mentees</td>
<td>Touch base</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Professional development topic</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 8th</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>Conclusion and celebration</td>
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Program Support

• Office for Research
  – Program Coordinator
  – Grants Officers
  – Research Ethics Team

• Other Resources
  – Faculty/Centre/Institute/Service Area
  – Library
  – Human Resources (eg. Staff development)
  – External (eg. professional association)
Evaluation Strategy

• Evaluation questions
  – Did we achieve what we set out to achieve?
  – Are there ways that we could do better?
  – Were there any other outcomes that we did not expect?

• Evaluation tools
  – Quantitative
    • Evaluation surveys
    • Participation details
  – Qualitative
    • Evaluation surveys
    • Ad hoc
    • Feedback at forums

• What happens with the evaluation results?
  – Recommendations for
    • Future programs
    • Refining the Research Mentoring Framework
    • Other resources and programs
How does mentoring work?

• driven by the needs of the mentee
• variety of methods (eg. face-to-face meetings, email or telephone conversations)
• can involve shadowing, coaching, role-playing or practicing, giving constructive feedback, guiding and advising
• The mentor may be a motivator, a sounding board, a coach, guide or teacher
Roles and Responsibilities

• Listening actively
• Build trust
• Determine goals
• Encourage
• Learn quickly
• Manage the relationship
Identifying Mentors

REMEMBER

• You can learn from people you don’t necessarily like as long as you have respect for them.

• The perfect mentor is not necessarily older or even more senior. The critical ingredient for success is the specific expertise, skills or attributes that a person possesses. [1]

## Mentoring Types

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What type of Mentor are you?</th>
<th>What type of Mentor do you need?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>teacher</td>
<td>helps you learn how to learn</td>
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<tr>
<td>coach</td>
<td>assists you to develop and refine skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sponsor</td>
<td>promotes your abilities and attributes to others and provides opportunities for you to develop a visible profile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>protector</td>
<td>helps you to reduce unnecessary risks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>role model</td>
<td>provides an example of skills or attributes that you admire and which you can develop</td>
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<tr>
<td>counsellor</td>
<td>helps you to define and clarify issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>guide</td>
<td>provides key stepping stones for you to follow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>adviser</td>
<td>gives examples of what they might do in a similar situation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>leader</td>
<td>demonstrates by example</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>supporter</td>
<td>provides you with a sounding board and assists with the development of your self-confidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>friend</td>
<td>lends an empathetic ear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>challenger</td>
<td>assists you to stretch beyond your comfort zone[1]</td>
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Section 3 – How does mentoring work
How will the program interact with day-to-day supervision and the performance management system?

• Mentoring is driven by the objectives of the mentee.

• The mentor acts as a sounding board rather than a supervisor or manager giving direct advice that needs to be followed.

• BUT it is useful to refer to your SPDP when deciding on their mentoring goals.
Setting expectations & boundaries

_The Mentoring Agreement_

- **Goals**
  - Clear, realistic, measurable, achievable

- **Responsibilities**
  - Who will do what when?

- **Boundaries**
  - When and how do you agree to communicate with one another?
  - What are the topics that are relevant?
  - What is off-limits, in terms of your mentoring relationship?
Goal Setting

SMART Objectives

**SPECIFIC**
- is it clear what has to happen?

**MEASURABLE**
- how will you know it has been achieved?

**ATTAINABLE**
- are you being realistic?

**RESULTS-ORIENTED / REALISTIC**
- does this progress you towards your goal?
- is it practical for you to achieve within specified timeframe?

**TIME-LIMITED**
- when should you have achieved it?

Section 3 – How does mentoring work
The Learning Journal

• Purpose
  – To provide a useful tool for reflexive learning

• Content
  – Focus questions for consideration after each mentoring meeting
  – Confidential
  – Useful for action planning
Learning Styles

• **Learning to implement** - Doing things well
  – Adherence to, followed by adaptation of, rules and procedures, and the establishment of acceptable explanations of why things are as they are.
  – Eg. establishing the setting for a new job or organisation

• **Learning to improve** - Doing things better
  – Drawing own conclusions on experience and the beginning of experimentation.
  – New ideas are from within as a result of a real experience.
  – Eg. Sounding board

• **Learning to integrate** - Doing better things
  – Involves holistic thinking, using initiative and recognising assumptions and diversity
  – Involves trying different perspectives and reflecting on action, dealing with issues, themes and relationships, in order to determine one’s purpose in life.
  – Eg. Through insightful and challenging questioning, and in-depth reflection

Adapted from Woodd (1997) Mentoring in further and higher education: learning from the literature, *Education and Training*, 39(9), p5
Tips for Avoiding Stumbling Blocks

• Keep your mentee/mentor informed of any planned periods of absence
• Respect confidentiality
• Establish a clear action plan
• Be realistic and honest about your availability
• View your mentor as a ‘learning facilitator’ rather than an expert on all things.
• Identify, explore and learn from your differences as well as your commonalities

Section 3 – How does mentoring work
Trouble Shooting

Participant identifies problem

Participant talks with mentoring partner

Has the problem been resolved?

Yes
Mentoring continues

No
Participant informs and seeks advice of program coordinator

Has the problem been resolved?

Yes
Mentoring continues

No
Can an alternative mentor be assigned?

Yes
Mentoring continues

No
Participation concluded*

Section 3 – How does mentoring work
Getting the most out of your mentoring relationship

• ‘you will get out what you put in’
• be honest
• remember that this is a two-way relationship
• be prepared for the relationship to change over time
• be on time
• set realistic expectations
• recognise that this is a professional relationship
• provide positive feedback