QUT Career Mentor Scheme
2014 Mentor Information

www.careers.qut.edu.au/mentor
Welcome

Welcome to the 2013 Career Mentor Scheme and thank you for your support of QUT students as they begin their transition from university to the real world.

The Career Mentor Scheme provides industry professionals with the opportunity to encourage, support and share their knowledge with students who are interested in starting a career in the same industry. We hope that your participation in the Career Mentor Scheme is a rewarding way for you to help nurture and develop a future member of your profession.

The role of the Mentor

A mentor acts as an adviser and resource person; is someone who has knowledge, skills, information, and experience in their chosen industry; and is willing and able to share these in order to help the mentee’s professional growth.

The role of the Student Mentee

Mentees are typically students looking to bridge the gap between being a student and entering the workplace, they identify mentors as an invaluable resource during this transition period. Mentees are the drivers of the relationship and ideally will take most of the responsibility for their self-directed learning and exploration.

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<tr>
<th>Mentor responsibilities</th>
<th>Mentee responsibilities</th>
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<tr>
<td>Act as a source of information and/or insight into your chosen occupational field.</td>
<td>Take time to contact and meet with their mentor, both in the initial stages and on an ongoing basis.</td>
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<td>Counselling regarding career development or strategies for achieving professional goals.</td>
<td>Work to foster the mentoring relationship.</td>
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<td>Assist with personal goal setting and planning.</td>
<td>Think about goals before meeting with their mentor and be willing to openly discuss these goals with them.</td>
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<td>Teach specific skills including job seeking strategies and resume writing.</td>
<td>Communicate expectations, needs and feelings.</td>
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<td>Listen with an open mind, challenging and encouraging the exploration of ideas.</td>
<td>Develop a trust relationship and share concerns.</td>
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<td>Encourage professional behaviour.</td>
<td>Negotiate activities in order to obtain goals.</td>
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<td>Facilitate self-directed learning.</td>
<td>Embrace learning and exploration with enthusiasm and commitment.</td>
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<td>Provide feedback on observed performance.</td>
<td>Be willing to listen and when appropriate take advice and also give feedback on each session.</td>
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<td>Coach for effective coping strategies.</td>
<td>Learn to accept feedback and use it positively.</td>
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<td>Commit approximately one hour per fortnight to the mentoring process.</td>
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Timeline: What Happens Now?

**FEB / MARCH**
- Briefing Sessions for mentees and new mentors and matching. Please email mentor@qut.edu.au if you wish to attend the next New Mentor Briefing session.

**APRIL**
- You will be invited to a networking launch function with your mentee. This is a great opportunity to also meet other mentors and mentees participating in the Scheme. Depending on the timing of your allocation, it is a good idea to meet face-to-face with your mentee before this function.

**MAY / JUNE**
- Progress reports will be requested from mentors to ensure that contact has been made by their student and all is going well. If no contact has eventuated, the student’s participation in the Scheme will be evaluated. If the match is cancelled, we will endeavour to rematch the mentor with another mentee. Students will also be required to complete a Progress Report as a check point to ensure that the relationship is progressing well from their point of view.

**JULY**
- Mentors and matched mentees will be invited to a mid-year function. This function is an opportunity for mentors and mentees to meet again in an informal setting and network with other participants in the Scheme. It is also a great way to kick off the second half of the mentoring year following the exam period and holidays.

**OCTOBER**
- Your mentoring relationship will formally continue until the end of October (although students will have insurance until the end of the year). An end-of-year function will be held at this time to thank participants for their efforts throughout the year. The Mentor and Mentee of the Year awards are presented at this function.

**NOVEMBER**
- Mentors and Mentees are invited to give us feedback about the Scheme. Mentors will also be asked to confirm their participation for the following year.

**DECEMBER**
- Although the Career Mentor Scheme has officially ended, we encourage mentors and mentees to keep in touch.

### 2014 Semester Dates

#### Semester 1
- **24 February – 30 May 2013**
  - **Semester commences:** 24 February
  - **Mid Semester break:** 18 April – 25 April
  - **Exam prep:** 2 - 6 June
  - **Exams:** 7 - 24 June
  - **Vacation:** 25 June - 18 July

#### Semester 2
- **21 July – 24 October 2013**
  - **Semester commences:** 21 July
  - **Mid Semester break:** 29 Sept – 3 Oct
  - **Exam prep:** 27 Oct – 29 Oct
  - **Exams:** 30 Oct – 13 Nov

#### Summer Program
- **17 November – 6 February 2014**
  - **Exams:** 9 – 20 February 2014
Frequently Asked Questions

More FAQs are available on the Career Mentor Website at www.careers.qut.edu.au/employer/mentor/faqs.jsp or contact the Career Mentor Scheme Coordinator if you have any questions or concerns throughout the year about the Scheme, your mentee or your mentoring relationship.

What are the time commitments?
The Career Mentor Scheme officially runs from April until October/November each year and, as a general guide, mentors and students make contact for approximately one hour each fortnight. This may vary during busy times and each pair will determine their own mentoring schedule based on their individual availability.

In what form does contact usually take place?
Contact can include face-to-face meetings (including work visits or coffee catch-ups), emails, telephone calls, Skype or facilitating work exposure within the industry. Each pair will negotiate the type of contact which will work most effectively for their mentoring relationship and individual schedules.

What if I can’t give the student work experience?
Work experience is not an automatic part of the Career Mentor Scheme and no promise of employment is made or sought in a mentoring relationship. However, mentors are welcome to offer work experience to their mentee and QUT insurance covers students for unpaid work experience if this eventuates.

Are students covered by QUT insurance?
QUT maintains a range of insurance policies that cover students while they are involved in the Career Mentor Scheme. For more information on the policies, please visit the insurance page on the Career Mentor Scheme website – www.careers.qut.edu.au/employer/mentor/insurance.jsp

What level of involvement does QUT have?
QUT offers support by providing a coordinator who manages the Career Mentor Scheme throughout the year and is available to advise and assist mentors.

Please contact the Career Mentor Scheme Coordinator at any time throughout the year to discuss any concerns or questions you may have, or to let us know how you are going with your mentoring relationship.

Diana McCluskey
Career Mentor Scheme Coordinator
Ph: 07 3138 2687
Email: mentor@qut.edu.au

Skills students want to develop

- Communication
- Critical Thinking
- Technical/ Professional/ Research
- Social/ Ethical Responsibility
- Teamwork
- Initiative/ Enterprise
- Leadership
- Problem Solving
- Managing/ Organising
- Creativity/ Design
- Life Management/ Life-Long Learning
- Life Management/ Life-Long Learning

What do students expect from their mentor?
Students want their mentor:
- To be approachable, positive, accessible, available, supportive, encouraging, open and honest.
- To have a genuine interest in assisting students.
- To know what they are willing to offer a student as part of the mentoring relationship.
- To listen and offer constructive criticism and advice.
- To be available, contact often, dedicate time to mentoring, respond to emails and telephone calls.
- To discuss everything – with real life explanations and advice.
- To talk about career paths, career guidance, networking advice, job applications.
- To offer workplace visits, work experience or a reference (as appropriate).
Goals and Expectations
Before meeting with your mentee and entering into a mentoring relationship, it is important for both parties to formulate a plan of what they wish to achieve through the mentoring relationship.

Before being matched with their mentor, students must attend a compulsory briefing session and are asked to come up with some specific and achievable objectives before meeting with their mentor.

Sample student objectives
- Expand my network within my industry to include on average two new contacts a month.
- Improve both my written and verbal communication skills to a professional level by asking my mentor to critique my assignments and undertaking a practical placement in second semester.
- Increase my awareness of a real organisational setting by familiarising myself with my mentor’s workplace both through questioning my mentor and a site visit in the mid-year break (as appropriate).

A good place to start in your first meeting is to ask your mentee to outline what their goals and expectations are, and to ensure that they are congruent with what you wish to achieve. It is also advised you ensure that you a) can, and b) are willing to, work towards their expectations.

Time limits
There is no right or wrong answer to the question of how much time you should allow for mentoring activities. Each mentoring pair should determine their own mentoring schedule based on their individual availability and schedules.

It is important to set limits around how much time you are willing to provide at your first meeting as this will set the framework for your mentoring relationship. On average mentors and mentees report spending one hour per fortnight on mentor related activities, this figure is the average, with some relationships being more active, and others being far less involved. Mentoring activities can include:

- Face-to-face meetings
- Networking events
- Emails
- Workplace visits
- Telephone calls
- Instant messaging

Be careful – mentors
Students often do not have email at home or do not check their email every day. It is important to discuss from the outset some rules put in place, e.g. Turnaround time of one week on emails perhaps. You also need to manage the student’s expectations— if they are expecting a daily email relationship with you and you are overwhelmed by emails every day, then you will struggle to give a timely response.

What mentors SHOULD NOT do for students
All students
- Be the driver of the relationship and continually chase up contact with their student – motivation and follow though are needed by the student.
- Be a professional referee before getting to know their student.
- Be expected to provide students with work experience if this is not appropriate for your work place – however, work experience is very welcome addition to the mentoring experience if available and appropriate.

International Students
- Assist students gain permanent residency or work visas.
- Sponsor students to stay in Australia.
- Be an English tutor, or correct grammar and English language in assignments.

If you have any concerns about the Scheme, your mentee or your mentoring relationship at anytime, please contact the Career Mentor Scheme Coordinator on 07 3138 2687 or email mentor@qut.edu.au.
**Suggested Discussion Topics and Activities**

Mentee should be the drivers of the relationship, but it is also helpful if mentors have suggestions on what both parties can do within the mentoring relationship.

Below is a list of suggested discussions and activities. This list is not exhaustive, and some ideas may not be applicable or appropriate for your industry. You may also have your own ideas about how you would like to structure the mentoring relationship with your mentee. We would welcome any suggestions you may have to add to this list which may be helpful for other mentors within the Scheme.

### Discussions to be had

- Discuss your background and career path to date;
- Discuss key tasks and duties of your current position;
- Explore your mentee’s current career goals and expectations of a career path within the field;
- Discuss areas of specialisation and job opportunities within the field in general and specifically for graduates;
- Arrange access to a recent graduate to give your mentee an insight into what to expect as a new graduate in their organisation;
- Explore strategies aimed at improving your mentee’s ability to gain employment in the field;
- Assist your mentee in choosing subjects;
- Discuss current trends, issues, and areas of interest;
- Examine the relationship between theory and practice, i.e. discuss university assignments from a practical viewpoint;
- Discuss ethical considerations of your industry’s practice and conduct;
- Discuss registration pathways and requirements. – E.g. Psychology, CPA program.

### Practical ideas to implement

- Resume critique and fine tuning from employers point of view;
- Provide feedback on individual letters of application for positions;
- Interview preparation, mock interview practice;
- Allow your mentee to shadow you or another nominated staff member; giving exposure to daily activities for a greater appreciation of what the job involves;
- Allow your mentee to attend meetings and hold follow up discussions;
- Allow your mentee to accompany you to association events, seminars or training and development activities;
- Provide networking opportunity with others in the department / industry;
- Show your mentee around your workplace and explain how different roles rely upon each other;
- Involve your mentee in a project, having achievable outcomes for both parties;
- Provide opportunity to gain practical work experience (if appropriate);
- Give your mentee task descriptions of different jobs in the field;
- Show your mentee past examples of work completed and assess why it was, or was not, successful or effective.
Potential difficulties and strategies to overcome them

As part of your mentoring relationship you may experience difficulties throughout the mentoring year. The table below outlines a list of problems that mentors in previous years have encountered and some suggested strategies for overcoming these problems.

If you have any concerns about the Scheme, your mentee or your mentoring relationship at anytime, please contact the Career Mentor Scheme Coordinator on 07 3138 2687 or email mentor@qut.edu.au.

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<tr>
<th>PROBLEM</th>
<th>STRATEGY</th>
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<tr>
<td>Difference in expectations</td>
<td>The best strategy is to ensure there is open communication at all times and that each party knows what the other wants to gain from the relationship. These issues are best addressed during the initial meeting.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Time commitments – work, family life etc</td>
<td>Use all forms of communication – telephone, email and face-to-face. Approximate time commitments are one hour each fortnight however this will vary – it is to be a mutual agreement between you and your mentee. Try setting dates and times in advance to help with scheduling other things into your life.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Personality clashes</td>
<td>Please contact the Career Mentor Scheme Coordinator so that the situation does not get out of hand. Rematching is possible in extreme cases.</td>
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<td>Places to meet</td>
<td>Meetings do not necessarily have to take place at the mentor’s work – it may be more convenient to meet for lunch/coffee. Be creative and flexible in your approach.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Activities to do with your student</td>
<td>Refer to the Suggested Discussion Topics and Activities above or ask the student to suggest what they would like to achieve. If in doubt, please contact the Career Mentor Scheme Co-ordinator and they may be able to offer some more suggestions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Professional interests are not exactly aligned</td>
<td>It is almost impossible to facilitate a perfect match of professional interests. However, we do match as closely as possible. Many of the topics for mentoring are of a general nature that an experienced professional can help with. If your student has interests of a specific nature, then perhaps setting them up with contacts you might have can help solve this problem.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Not able to contact your student</td>
<td>Students are to make the first point of contact and drive the ongoing relationship. If they are not making contact or if their phone number or email is incorrect, then please contact the Career Mentor Scheme Co-ordinator for help to rectify the problem.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your details change</td>
<td>Please inform the Career Mentor Scheme Coordinator via email of your new details – <a href="mailto:mentor@qut.edu.au">mentor@qut.edu.au</a> or log on to your CareerHub profile to update your contact details, industry experience or interests at any time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentor can’t allow students into their workplace or give them work experience or employment</td>
<td>Work experience is not a requirement of the Career Mentor Scheme and in some cases will simply not be possible. If you can’t facilitate work experience in your workplace and the student is keen, then perhaps by using your network you could set the student up with someone who can. Employment should not be an expected outcome of the Career Mentor Scheme.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insurance</td>
<td>Students are fully covered by insurance when at their mentor’s workplace or participating in unpaid activities related to the Career Mentor Scheme. Insurance details are located on the website, or for further information please contact the Career Mentor Scheme Coordinator.</td>
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Mature age students

Mature age students are defined as students who do not come straight to university from High School, but rather who have had time and experience under their belt before commencing their university studies – age 25 upwards.

You may find mature age students already have a vast background of experience, and are looking for advice and/or networking from their mentor rather than work experience or exposure to a workplace. You might also find mature age students have more focus and clarity on what they want to do when they graduate.

Mature age students usually express a wish for older and more experienced mentors, and we do try to accommodate this. However, our matching is based not on age or experience, but on common professional interests and location of both parties.

Insurance

Insurance for the QUT Career Mentor Scheme covers students undertaking site/office visits and unpaid work experience at their mentor’s place of work, or in a work setting organized through their QUT mentor. Work experience and/or site/office visits must be related to the student’s field of study and supervised either by their mentor or by someone appointed by their mentor.

QUT carries four insurance policies that are relevant to student’s activities within the Career Mentor Scheme: Public and Products Liability, Professional Indemnity, Medical Malpractice and Group Personal Accident.

For more information on the policies, please visit the insurance link on the Career Mentor Scheme website – www.careers.qut.edu.au/employer/mentor/insurance.jsp

Mentoring Agreement

A mentoring contract or written agreement is a tool that mentees and mentors may wish to use to formalise the arrangement and pre-plan activities. Whilst not binding, a contract allows both parties to be clear on what they wish to achieve out of the relationship and begins the thought process of how to achieve both sets of objectives. Please note this contract is not a static document and should be amendable by both parties at any time.

Whilst this is not a requirement of the Career Mentor Scheme and it is understood that some relationships would prefer to work on a more informal basis, developing a contract allows some parties to feel more committed to the process and can be a useful starting point for discussions between mentors and mentees.

If you choose not to use a contract in a written format, then it is recommended you specify how you will ensure your mentoring relationship will meet expectations and achieve set objectives. Whether you end up with a formal or informal contract, or written set of goals and operating procedures, or even just a verbal discussion on what you wish to achieve over the year, it is often useful to have something specified in writing.

The next page contains an example mentoring agreement. This agreement is available in electronic format from the Resources link at www.careers.qut.edu.au/employer/mentor
Example Mentoring Agreement

Date of commencement:

Name of mentor: ______________________ Name of mentee: ______________________

We agree to the following:

We have agreed on the following goals and objectives as the focus of this mentoring relationship:
1.
2.
3.

Communication methods and Frequency
Here you can outline the frequency and nature of the meetings and the nature of the contact that you anticipate. Think about any restrictions regarding contact – e.g. Not during working hours, preferably by email, whether you agree that mobile phone contact is ok etc.

As the mentor I undertake to…….
The mentor summarises the responsibilities agreed to by the mentor in order to achieve the objectives. E.g. Introduce the mentee to relevant networks and colleagues; Provide feedback on the mentee’s progress towards learning objectives; Advise on relevant professional reading etc.

As the mentee I undertake to…….
The mentee summarises the responsibilities agreed to by the mentee in order to achieve the objectives. E.g. Keep a reflective journal; Attend two networking functions during the year; Seek out additional avenues of learning and skill development.

Activities
Bullet point some concrete activities or topics of discussion that will help the mentor and mentee achieve their goals. This section may need a page of its own!!

Problems/Help:
Specify ways in which you will seek help or overcome difficulties as they arise. E.g. Keep open lines of communication and be honest and tactful when broaching difficulties, Request assistance from the Career Mentor Scheme Coordinator if needed, keep regular contact by phone if meeting face-to-face becomes too difficult for a period.

Other:
You may wish to include any other items of importance to the mentoring partnership, e.g. Confidentiality, time periods where one party will be away.

Review of the mentoring partnership
You may wish to agree to come back to your objectives and action plan periodically to reflect on the achievements made and to consider whether there should be any adjustments or new objectives.
Distance Relationship Advice

A distance mentoring relationship is defined as one whereby the mentor and student are physically separated by one or both parties not being located in South East Queensland, and thus face limited opportunities in which to meet face-to-face. The aims of students joining the Career Mentor Scheme often include being able to gain industry experience, networking opportunities and/or exposure in a real profession. These objectives can be hard to meet in a distance relationship and perhaps creative solutions need to be found and/or the objectives of the student need to be moderated.

Points of difference/problems within distance relationships

The main difficulties that participants report focus around the issues of contact and building rapport. It is easier to lose contact via an email relationship. If you forget to reply and one party is left waiting on the other to reply, or vice versa, then the relationship can often falter. It is surprising how many times a relationship fails because both parties were waiting for the other to contact them! Regular meetings and/or points of contact can also be tougher to organise as they have to be at a certain time each week/month. You need to be reliable and organised! Distance relationships can also become quite impersonal as you do not have the chance to meet and build rapport with the other party face-to-face. Don’t be afraid to inject some personality into your communications and perhaps talking on the phone on occasion will help you both get to know each other on a deeper level. One final point to watch is the lack of feedback that can often occur when there is no face to face or verbal interaction. This can reduce the message being fully understood. Be clear in your communications and talk about your objectives for the Scheme upfront.

Example of the beginning of an email relationship

- First point of contact—student emails mentor, introduces themselves and attaches their resume.
- First reply email – the mentor outlines their career history.
- The student picks out some parts of the mentor’s experience, asks questions and looks for expansion on areas of interest.
- The student gives ideas as to what their career goals may be.
- The mentor comments, probes, clarifies and questions.
- Relationship continues from there.

Tips for success

- Check email regularly and don’t sit on an email for longer than a few days.
- Build rapport from day one. Discussions about non-career related interests can also be incorporated into the relationship. E.g. do you have common sporting interests?
- Use more than just email as a contact method.
- Be organised – think about what you wish to achieve throughout the year and discuss expectations up front with the other party.
- We tell students to show commitment from the start and establish a regular contact routine.
- Utilise other sources beyond the mentor for student’s information and progression. Set students tasks to complete, encourage students to search for networking events for themselves. Email the student any event information, newsletter or interesting articles that you think they might be interested in.
- Mentors may have colleagues or contacts in the Brisbane area that they can set students up with for a face-to-face meeting or workplace visit.

Contact methods

Email is definitely not the only way that you can communicate with your student over distance relationships. Phone calls are a great way of building rapport and achieving on-going interaction.

- Phone at a regular time – E.g. Every month.
- Communicate on-line together via instant messaging.
- Teleconferencing/Net meeting - Useful if both parties own the same software, and allows for information to be shared collaboratively over the net.
- If you sometimes travel to Brisbane, it is worthwhile discussing when any trips will be planned and taking this opportunity to meet face-to-face.
Help, advice and further information
The Career Mentor Scheme website has information and links to pages on mentoring.
If you have any concerns about the Scheme, your mentee or your mentoring relationship at anytime, please contact the Career Mentor Scheme Coordinator.

Diana McCluskey
Career Mentor Scheme Coordinator
Ph: (07) 3138 2687
Email: mentor@qut.edu.au

QUT Support Services
QUT has a number of support services that mentors may find useful in directing students to in order to complement the mentoring role.

Careers and Employment - www.careers.qut.edu.au
For information regarding current job opportunities, career counselling appointments, resume checking service, workshops on resume writing, employment skills and interview skills, graduate destinations or work experience insurance.

Counselling Service - www.counselling.qut.edu.au
The Counselling Service provides a professional, confidential and free counselling service to current QUT students.

Student Guild - www.guildonline.net/
QUT Student Guild offers a casual employment service, advertising part-time and non-professional employment for students. They also offer a number of support services, campus facilities, and campus events to QUT students.

International Student Services (ISS) - www.issupport.qut.edu.au
International students are advised that mentors cannot assist with the following:
- Assist students gain permanent residency or work visas;
- Sponsor students to stay in Australia;
- Be an English tutor, or correct grammar and English language in assignments.

International students can be directed to ISS for information on language, learning and student life, including employment issues such as visa requirements etc.
Thank you for your participation in the QUT Career Mentor Scheme.

Help give a student a flying start to their career