Royal Veterinary College
University of London

Mentoring Guide & Code

Contents

Acknowledgements

This Guide and Code has been produced by the HR Team following consultation with staff across the College in 2008/09 about what mentoring at RVC should be for. The College is grateful to Claire Townsend of Impact Training & Coaching for carrying out the consultation, and to the following staff for their contribution:

Sian Griffith
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Introduction

Lifelong learning is the underpinning educational philosophy of the Royal Veterinary College, and the development of all our staff – academic, research and support – to ensure that they achieve their full potential in their chosen career is fundamental to our purpose as an institution.

Our Corporate Plan for 2009-13 seeks to deliver the College's mission to enhance its global reputation as an outstanding veterinary college through seven strategic aims, all of which are based upon the pursuit of excellence across our academic, clinical and business activity. The values we embrace as an institution support these aims, and are set out below.

Staff and students of the Royal Veterinary College will:
• Act with integrity, honesty, and informed courage of conviction
• Be committed to, and exercise responsibility for, their own personal, academic and professional development
• Show fairness, professional impartiality and diligence
• Value diversity across disciplines, cultures and expertise
• Be explicit and straightforward, compassionate and respectful in their dealings with fellow staff and students, clients and visitors
• Accept responsibility for their actions
• Accept and take due account of feedback, in whatever form it is given
• Demonstrate a caring attitude and high ethical standards towards animals
• Respect the College's physical environment and property
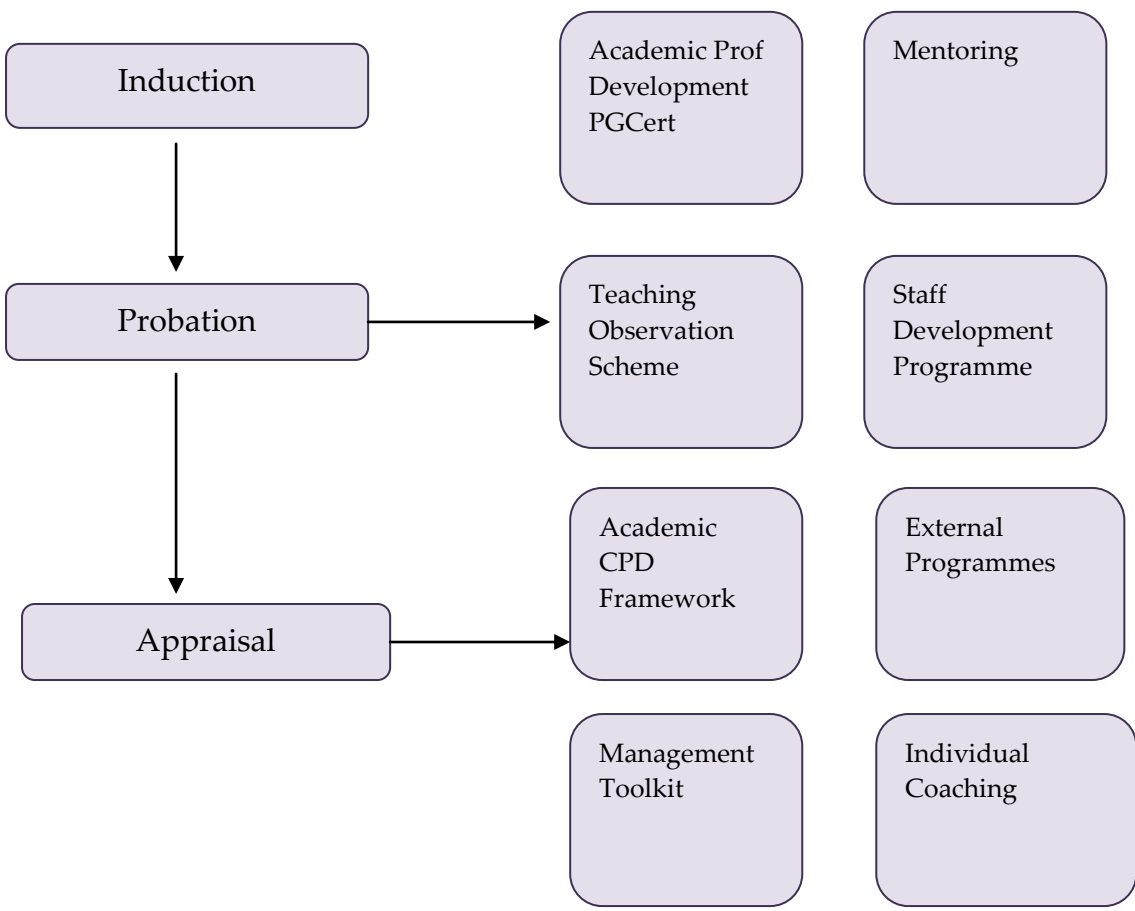• Aim for excellence in educational endeavours

It follows that the College has high expectations both of the way in which its staff are supported, managed and developed, and the extent to which staff themselves assume active responsibility for their own career and personal development.

The College's obligation is to put in place effective tools through which managerial and personal responsibility for individual career, professional and personal development can be exercised. This Guide and Code is one of those tools, and the diagram below shows where it fits within the overall staff development framework at RVC.

Whether you are considering becoming a Mentor or a Mentee, I believe the content of this document will make a real difference to your development at the College. I commend it to you without reservation.

Stuart Reid
Principal

The Staff Development Framework at RVC

Induction	Academic Prof Development PGCert	Mentoring
↓		
Probation →	Teaching Observation Scheme	Staff Development Programme
↓		
Appraisal →	Academic CPD Framework	External Programmes
	Management Toolkit	Individual Coaching

Part 1 - Mentoring in Context

The Purpose and Benefits of Mentoring

Mentoring has been defined as:-
"Help given by one person to another in making significant transitions in knowledge, work or thinking"

Within the context of the RVC Staff Development Framework, mentoring can help inform personal development planning via the probation and appraisal processes, ensuring that access to training programmes and other development opportunities are tailored to the needs, goals and aspirations of individual members of staff.

It is a valuable offering because it is focused on the needs of the person being mentored, ensuring that knowledge and experience is passed on through the organisation, and providing an opportunity for Mentors to further develop their skills.

Mentoring should not be limited to new members of staff, but it can be particularly beneficial in enabling them to assume responsibility, at an early stage, for their own development; and to relate this to the overall aims and objectives of their department and the wider College.

Benefits of Mentoring for the Mentee
- It can speed up the process of understanding a new job and culture;
- It can give insights on the formal and informal structures of the organisation;
- It helps with the development of practical skills in job related areas such as teaching, research or a technical specialism;
- It improves and develops professional and personal networks;
- It provides an opportunity for a new member of staff to reflect on their progress and identify ways of resolving any problems.

Benefits of Mentoring for the Mentor:
- It can help broaden long held skills and knowledge;
- It brings new insights into the organisation;
- It provides opportunities to demonstrate expertise and learn new ways to develop other people;
- It can consolidate and extend professional and personal networks.

What Mentoring Isn't

Mentoring is about sharing or passing on skills and knowledge already acquired. It is not about coaching or counselling, through which the person being coached finds answers for themselves through the support of the coach. The coach remains outside of the situation and does not offer up solutions etc. The experience the coach brings is questioning, listening, rapport building and facilitation, as opposed to context.

When Should Mentoring Begin?

Mentoring should not be entered into too early. Typically, it should start on completion of Induction,
i.e. three months after joining the College, when initial orientation is finished, and the basics of the job and how it relates to the objectives of the College are understood.

Mentoring and Early Career Researchers

Mentoring is appropriate to all groups of staff at any point in their career. However, it can be of particular relevance to Early Career Researchers, who are at a pivotal stage in their professional and personal development. The College's Code of Practice & Guide to the Management and Development of Research Staff sets out the framework within which these staff are managed.
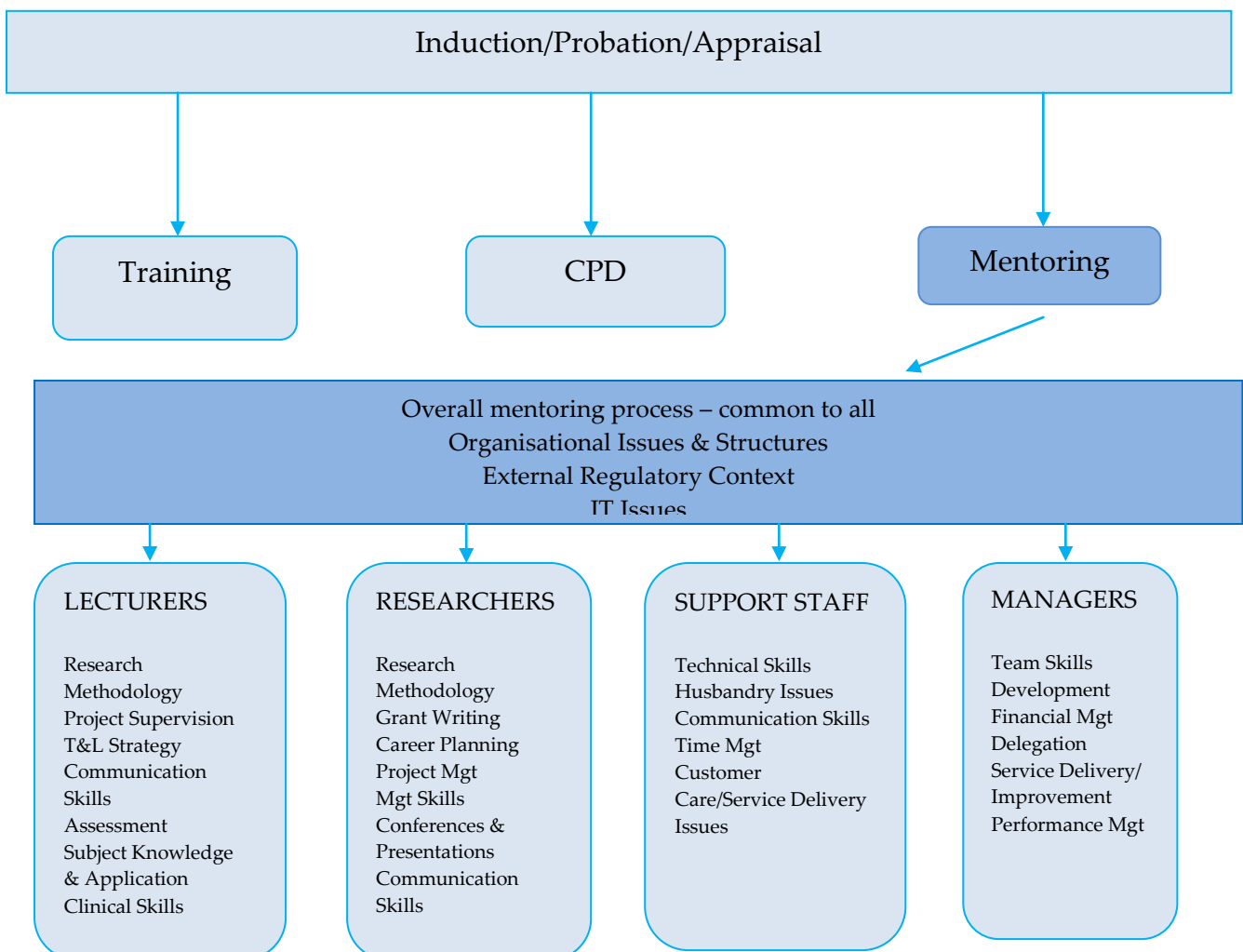
A Voluntary and Flexible Development Tool

Mentoring differs from other, more structured development processes such as induction, probation and appraisal because it can never work effectively if it is compulsory. To work, it must be entered into willingly, managed individually, and be shaped by the needs and priorities of the parties involved, i.e. the Mentee, the Mentor and their respective managers.

The role therefore of the College within the scheme is not to use it as a means of performance management or assessment, but to facilitate the effectiveness of mentoring by providing appropriate support, co-ordination and training.

Similarly, in a diverse educational and employment community such as the RVC, the content, structure and delivery of mentoring activities will vary significantly according to the particular roles of the parties involved, as is illustrated by the diagram below.

How Mentoring fits within the Staff Development Framework

Induction/Probation/Appraisal

Training   CPD   Mentoring

Overall mentoring process – common to all
Organisational Issues & Structures
External Regulatory Context
IT Issues

LECTURERS	RESEARCHERS	SUPPORT STAFF	MANAGERS
Research Methodology Project Supervision T&L Strategy Communication Skills Assessment Subject Knowledge & Application Clinical Skills	Research Methodology Grant Writing Career Planning Project Mgt Mgt Skills Conferences & Presentations Communication Skills	Technical Skills Husbandry Issues Communication Skills Time Mgt Customer Care/Service Delivery Issues	Team Skills Development Financial Mgt Delegation Service Delivery/ Improvement Performance Mgt

Support for The Mentoring Process

Responsibility for initiating, maintaining and developing individual Mentoring Agreements (see Part 4) lies with the members of staff concerned.

Responsibility for the support and co-ordination of mentoring activities lies with academic and service departments, working in collaboration with the Staff Development Team within Human Resources. This includes:-

- Keeping track of who has attended training associated with the Guide & Code
- Recruiting and developing Mentors and keeping the Directory of Mentors up to date
- Keeping a record of on-going mentoring relationships
- Gathering feedback from Mentor and Mentee at the end of the Mentoring Agreement
- Providing support to Mentors and Mentees during the process, e.g. advice on appropriate training solutions
- Co-ordinating changes and improvements to the process

The RVC Directory of Mentors

A Directory of Mentors is available from Human Resources for each of the sub-categories listed in the diagram on page 8. The list contains the names, specialisms and availability of all the College's Mentors.

Mentors are responsible for identifying the areas they are willing to Mentor in, and how much time they think that they can make available. They are also responsible for advising HR of any changes to their contact details, availability or range of specialisms.

Managerial Approval

A manager may suggest to a member of staff they consider becoming a Mentor at their appraisal, or as part of an informal discussion about their development. Alternatively, a member of staff may wish to become a Mentor and seek their manager's support.
In either case, the member of staff should apply to attend the College's Mentor Training Scheme (see Part 3). The application should be made via the on-line staff training request form which requires managers to confirm that they support the request for training. Before completing the training request form, both parties should agree the areas in which mentoring support might be offered and the likely time commitment this will involve.
At the end of the Mentor Training Scheme, each delegate will prepare their own entry for the Directory of Mentors.

Although not directly involved in the Mentoring process, the manager of the Mentee should be consulted before it begins about both the purpose of the mentoring, the time commitment involved, and the impact this might have on operational requirements.

Record Keeping

HR will maintain a central record of Mentors, Mentees, the areas individual pairings are working on, and the feedback received at the end of each Mentoring Agreement.

Matching Mentors and Mentees

Once mentoring has been identified as a suitable development opportunity the next step is to identify a suitable Mentor.

This can be done in a number of ways, including:-

- Personal knowledge – the Mentee may know of a suitable Mentor who fulfils the criteria
- Recommendation from line manager
- Looking at the Directory of Mentors

Contact with potential Mentors should be initiated by the Mentee, but HR can advise on suitability and availability. The potential Mentee may wish to meet and discuss the objectives of any Mentoring Agreement with two or three potential Mentors before coming to a mutual decision about which one it is most appropriate to work with.

It is important that the matching process takes account both of the purpose of the mentoring overall and the needs of the individual Mentee.

Mentoring is a voluntary and largely self managed process, but both parties must agree to enter into a Mentoring Agreement before it commences. Either party may withdraw from a Mentoring Agreement if the process is not delivering what they had expected, but see Part 3.

Part 2 - The Mentoring Process

Once the Mentor and Mentee have agreed to proceed the process should be as follows;

1. Arrange the first mentoring meeting – agree mutually suitable time and place.

2. First meeting - to set out the purpose and boundaries of the Mentoring Agreement and to begin to establish the relationship between the Mentor and Mentee. If appropriate, mentoring could begin at the first meeting.

3. Conduct mentoring as per contract agreement.

4. Review and feedback – in accordance with the arrangements set out in Mentoring Agreement. This helps to ensure that any changes needed are understood and implemented.

5. If the mentoring relationship is not working or needs change, it is important that the Mentor and Mentee both take responsibility for making those changes or ending the relationship.
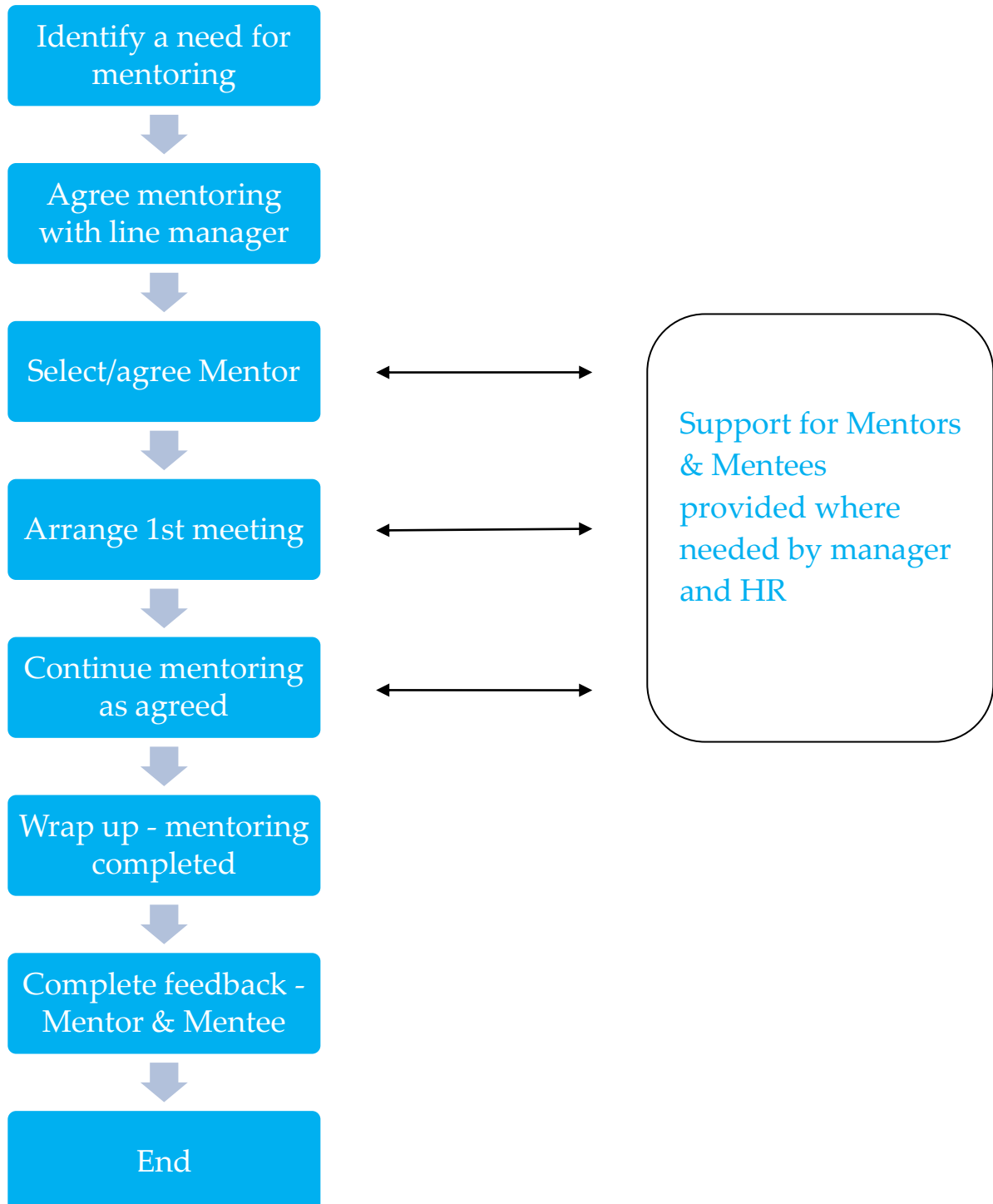
Ending the Mentoring Agreement

If either party wishes to end the mentoring before the time agreed in the Mentoring Agreement, there are three options

1. Advise the Mentor/Mentee directly that they want to stop and why. Giving feedback and raising issues appropriately and constructively.

2. Discuss with a third party (for example, line manager or member of HR) who can then feedback to the Mentor/Mentee.

3. If there has been a serious breach of the Mentoring Code (see Part 4), appropriate disciplinary or grievance procedures could be invoked.

The Mentor is responsible for advising HR when a Mentoring arrangement is brought to an end prematurely but is not obligated to disclose the reason.

Summary of the Mentoring Process

Identify a need for mentoring

↓

Agree mentoring with line manager

↓

Select/agree Mentor ⟷

Arrange 1st meeting ⟷ Support for Mentors & Mentees provided where needed by manager and HR

Continue mentoring as agreed ⟷

↓

Wrap up - mentoring completed

↓

Complete feedback - Mentor & Mentee

↓

End

The Structure of Mentoring Meetings

It is important that mentoring meetings follow a structure to ensure that the Mentor and Mentee achieve their objectives.

The GROW model which is commonly used for problem solving can provide a useful framework for structuring mentoring meetings.

G Goal	Identify the purpose of the mentoring session and what the Mentee would like to achieve from it
R Reality	What is the current situation? What have you done to date? Identify more detail and depth about the issue
O Options	Discuss options. Provide ideas, information and advice. Encourage openness and creativity in thinking and ideas. Give feedback
W Wrap Up	Agree actions. Agree next steps and next meeting if appropriate

Review of Mentoring

The Mentor and Mentee are at liberty to review the Mentoring Agreement as they see fit. However, to ensure the effectiveness of the Guide & Code as a whole, HR will in addition, invite all Mentors and Mentees to complete a Review Questionnaire at the end of the mentoring process.

Information obtained from the Questionnaire will be used to help improve the process and, appropriately annonymised, to provide reports on Mentoring to relevant College Committees, including the Teaching Quality Committee.

The Questionnaires can be accessed via the following links:-

Mentee: https://www.hrsurveys.rvc.ac.uk/mentee

Mentor: https://www.hrsurveys.rvc.ac.uk/mentor

Part 3 – Becoming a Mentor or Mentee

Becoming a Mentor

Why become a Mentor?

Mentors often say they want "to give something back" — especially if they have had good experiences that they wish to pass on, in order to help a less experienced colleague progress ("if only I'd known then what I know now").

In addition, the skills needed to be a Mentor are transferable to a wide range of contexts which can support the Mentor's own career progression including management. The mentoring relationship enables you to:

- develop strengths (yours and theirs)
- work with people from different contexts and backgrounds
- practice offering positive and constructive feedback
- generate workable solutions together
- motivate, advise and support whilst helping someone to make their own decisions and take   responsibility for their own actions and development

The result is often increased job and personal satisfaction — the rewards of seeing someone you've helped progress and succeed.

It is not necessary for someone to have been employed by the College for a long time or be senior in order to become a Mentor. Peer Mentors who are at the same level as colleagues they are mentoring have different experiences that can be of value. Also, relatively recent experience of certain areas such as going through the probationary period for lecturers can be of value to newer staff members.

What makes a good Mentor?

- A desire to help others to succeed
- An ability to maintain confidentiality and trust
- Good questioning and listening skills
- An ability to give and receive feedback
- An ability to empathise
- Self awareness
- Being non judgemental
- A willingness to commit time

Training

Completion of the Mentor Training Scheme is a recommended part of becoming a Mentor. More details are available at http://intranet.rvc.ac.uk/HR/train/ index.cfm

The Scheme covers the following:-
- What is mentoring?
- What makes a good Mentor?
- The difference between mentoring, coaching and counselling
- The role of the Mentor and Mentee
- The RVC mentoring process
- Managing the mentoring relationship (including the Mentoring Agreement, ethics and confidentiality)
- Skills for effective mentoring
  - Questioning and listening
  - Giving and receiving feedback
  - Goal setting and action planning
- Planning and structuring the mentoring meeting –
- using GROW
- Keeping Mentees motivated
- Dealing with issues (stopping the mentoring process, breaches of ethics, if the Mentee needs
- additional/ other support)

As part of your ongoing development as a Mentor, it is important to continue to review your own effectiveness and continue to develop your mentoring skills where appropriate. This can be done thorough the following:-
- Getting feedback from Mentees
- Discussing issues with a third party (whilst respecting Mentee confidentiality)
- Attending additional training to build skills or refresher Mentor training
- Taking part in discussions/ review meetings with other Mentors

Becoming a Mentee

Your route to taking part in mentoring can be via a range of different entry points. For example:

- A need has arisen during discussions with your line manager at your appraisal
- You fit into a pre determined category where mentoring is available to all (e.g. Early Career
- Researchers or Probationary Lecturers)
- You wish to develop in a particular area and would like some additional support

Once you are clear about what you would like to achieve from mentoring the next step is to find a Mentor (see Part 2).

Once you have found your Mentor, you have a joint responsibility with them to ensure that the process is followed and that you get what you need from it. Most Mentors undertake training and should therefore be equipped with the skills needed to help you get the most from the mentoring process.

You will be encouraged to give feedback to your Mentor and this can be done at any stage in the process.

What makes a good Mentee?

- Willingness to confront challenges
- Ability to give and receive feedback
- Enthusiasm
- Self-awareness
- Honesty

Getting the Best from Mentoring

Remember that the Mentor is helping you in your development and career so you need to take responsibility for ensuring that you get the most from the relationship.

- Try to set a regular time for meetings and take control of maintaining regular contact
- Prepare for your meetings beforehand so that you don't waste valuable time
- Don't make too many demands on your Mentor's time. Remember that they are busy and giving up their time to help you.
- Be willing to learn from your Mentor. Be open to suggestions and try out their ideas.
- Tell your Mentor if you acted on their advice and what the outcome was
- Provide feedback to your Mentor. It is important for your Mentor to know that you are interested in developing your skills and making use of their knowledge.

Checklist for Mentees

Prior to your first contact with your Mentor ask yourself the following questions:-

What would I like to discuss with my Mentor?

What are my main objectives?

Where am I on my path to achieving my objectives?

What do I need to do to get where I want to be?

What are my expectations of a Mentor and what can my Mentor do to help me?

Agree with your Mentor
- How often and where you will meet?
- How much time will be spent at each meeting?
- What you will do if a meeting has to be cancelled or rescheduled?
- What method of communication you will use between meetings?

For subsequent meetings
- Review your progress since your last meeting by asking yourself:
  - What have I done/ achieved since the last meeting?
  - Was it what I planned to achieve?
  - What have I learnt?
  - What went well?
  - What could have gone better?

- Decide what you want to discuss further with your Mentor – what are your objectives and how would you like to use the time effectively

General points for mentoring meetings
- Remember that you should be doing most of the talking
- Aim to always be on time. If you are unavoidably delayed, contact your Mentor as soon as possible
- Use the opportunity productively for your own development – don't moan, gossip or digress
- Should you experience any difficulties with your mentoring relationship, raise these with your Mentor and identify how you would like these things to change
- Be clear about your expectations and give feedback to your Mentor on the process from your point of view.

Part 4 – The Mentoring Agreement & Code

The Mentoring Agreement

To ensure that the mentoring process, including the content of the mentoring sessions is clear and acceptable to both parties, a Mentoring Agreement is important to complete.

Please use the following areas as guidelines and feel free to add any additional areas or points that you feel are important.

It is important that these areas are discussed between the Mentor and Mentee and that you both agree to what will be contained in the contract.

Once you have agreed the items for the Agreement, ensure that both of you have got a copy. This can form the basis of any reviews and feedback throughout, and at the end of the process.

The Agreement could include:
- The purpose of the mentoring (from the point of view of the Mentee)
- What the end point could look like (How you will know that you have reached your goal)
- Confidentiality – expectations and limits
- How often you expect to meet
- How long the meetings will be
- What contact, if any, will be available between meetings
- How long the mentoring relationship may be expected to last
- How to deal with any issues or changes

An example Mentoring Agreement is shown opposite.

A blank version of the Agreement is available to download from the Forms section of the HR website.

Whilst it is not mandatory to complete an agreement the benefits outweigh the risks of not having one! It ensures a good fit; provides clarity of arrangements and time commitment and gives clear expectations.

Example Mentoring Agreement

This Agreement has been agreed with the Mentor and Mentee and will form the basis of the ongoing mentoring relationship. The agreement will be reviewed as the mentoring progresses and changes can be made, if required, to any aspect of the Agreement to reflect changing priorities, timescales or needs of the Mentor or Mentee. Changes should be made in agreement with both parties.

Mentor name	Anne Green
Mentee name	Fred Black – Research Assistant
Date of agreement	6th January 2011
What will the mentoring cover?	• To review my current career and look at career planning options • To look at my current research methodology and review options for improving or increasing the range of methods used • To improve aspects of project management skills
Frequency, duration and location of meetings	Approximately monthly of 1 to 1.5 hours duration. Meetings will be conducted in Anne's office
Duration of mentoring (if known)	We anticipate that the mentoring will last for approximately 6 months but is has been agreed that this will be reviewed as the mentoring progresses and that Anne will give as much notice as possible if for any reason she is unable to continue as a Mentor.
Communication between meetings	Via email as primary communication method. If a discussion is needed between mentoring meetings this can be arranged via email at a mutually convenient time.
Confidentiality	We agree to adhere to confidentiality as outlined in this agreement and within the Mentoring Code

We agree that the information contained above is a fair and accurate summary of the mentoring purpose and process as agreed on the above date.

 Mentor: Anne Green _____

Mentee: Fred Black _____

The RVC Mentoring Code

The Mentor must acknowledge the dignity of all. They must conduct themselves in a way which respects diversity and promotes equal opportunities.

It is the primary responsibility of the Mentor to provide the best possible support to the Mentee and to act in such a way as to cause no harm to the Mentee.

The Mentor is committed to functioning from a position of dignity, autonomy and personal responsibility.

This Ethical Code covers the following:
• Competence
• Context
• Boundary Management
• Integrity
• Professionalism
• Confidentiality

Competence
The Mentor will:
a. Ensure that their level of experience and knowledge is sufficient to meet the needs of the Mentee.

b. Ensure that their capability is sufficient to enable them to operate according to this Code of Ethics and any standards that may subsequently be produced.

c. Develop and enhance their level of competence by participating in relevant training and appropriate ongoing development activities.

d. Take part in reviews and assessments of competence to ensure they are continuing to deliver competent mentoring.

Context

The Mentor will:

a. Understand and ensure that the mentoring relationship reflects the context within which the mentoring is taking place.

b. Ensure that the expectations of the Mentee are understood and that they themselves understand how those expectations are to be met.

c. Seek to create an environment in which the Mentee is focused on and has the opportunity for learning.

Boundary Management

The Mentor will:

a. At all times operate within the limits of their own competence, recognise where that competence has the potential to be exceeded and where necessary refer the Mentee either to a more experienced Mentor, or support the Mentee in seeking the help of another professional.

b. Be aware of the potential for conflicts of interest of an academic, professional, commercial, operational or emotional nature to arise through the mentoring relationship and deal with them quickly and effectively to ensure there is no detriment to the Mentee or the College.

Integrity

The Mentor will:

a. Maintain throughout the level of confidentiality which is appropriate and is agreed at the start of the relationship.

b. Disclose information only where explicitly agreed with the Mentee, unless the Mentor believes that there is convincing evidence of serious danger to the client or others if the information is withheld.

c. Act within applicable law and not encourage, assist or collude with others engage in conduct which is dishonest, unlawful, unprofessional or discriminatory.

Professionalism

The Mentor will:

a. Respond to the client's learning and development needs as defined by the agenda brought to the mentoring relationship.

b. Not exploit the Mentee in any manner, including, but not limited to, financial, sexual or those matters within the professional relationship. The Mentor will ensure that the durations of the Mentoring Agreement is only as long as is necessary for the Mentee.

c. Understand that professional responsibilities continue beyond the termination of any mentoring relationship. These include the following:

- Maintenance of agreed confidentiality if all information relating to Mentees
- Avoidance of any exploitation of the former relationship
- Provision of any follow-up which has been agreed to
- Safe and secure maintenance of all related records and data

d. Demonstrate respect of the variety of different approaches to mentoring

e. Never represent the work and views of others as their own

f. Ensure that any claim of competence and training undertaken is clearly and accurately explained to potential Mentees and that no false or misleading claims are made or implied.

Confidentiality

The relationship between the Mentor and the Mentee is based on confidentiality. This means that anything discussed within the mentoring relationship is private and that the Mentor will not repeat any of the content of the mentoring meetings to other people.

There are certain exceptions to this which need to be agreed at the beginning of the mentoring relationship.

- If both partners agree that the Mentor can speak to someone else about an issue or problem. The Mentor and Mentee will agree who the Mentor will speak to and the boundaries of the discussion

- If the Mentor believes that there is a risk of harm to the Mentee or any other person, based on something the Mentee has said, or that a crime has been or is going to be committed. In any of these cases the Mentor will be obliged to report the issue to the Mentoring Scheme Coordinator, a member of HR or another member of staff.

Compliance with the Mentoring Code

The Mentor and Mentee should be familiar with the College Mentoring Code and use this as the basis for the mentoring relationship. Should the Mentee feel that the Mentor is not operating within the code, they should raise this with their Mentor or discuss with the Mentoring Coordinator of a member of the HR team.