

# Mentoring Handbook

A guide to mentoring at Edith Cowan University





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## Preface

The adjustment to university life is often associated with stress and anxiety. For some students this can reach such a high level in the early stages of semester that they decide to terminate their studies and to leave the university. There are a number of reasons that may account for this stress and anxiety including, student perception of university life not really matching the reality, anxiety over learning or assessment, and coming to terms with the presentation style required for written work at University. This manual describes a process for supporting students in their transition to university through the use of peer mentoring

This manual draws in particular upon on the experience of academics, administrative support staff and students in the School of Psychology and the School of Education, at Edith Cowan University. This manual provides those seeking to undertake peer mentoring for the first time with guidance and direction so that they might be effective and efficient in their efforts.

We hope you find the manual useful. It is not intended as a scholarly text but rather as a working document and your feedback is most welcome. Mentoring is always a journey of discovery and we have certainly enjoyed the journey so far. We hope you will too!

Special thanks to

Lynne Cohen; Deb Callcott; and the authors of the Peer Mentoring Programme Manual for the School of Psychology at Edith Cowan University:

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# Mentoring

## For the Mentor

ECU supports and encourages the growth of strategically managed mentoring activities across the University. This section describes a common framework that can be used to support and inform the development of mentoring arrangements at Edith Cowan University.

This mentoring program recognises:

- that mentoring is a relationship that is entered into and developed voluntarily and is not a process to be imposed;
- mentoring as a valuable and valued element of student development; and
- that mentoring relationships are governed by existing policies on quality, occupational safety and health, equal opportunity, inclusiveness and privacy.

Mentoring requires dedication from the mentor and a commitment to participate in the mentoring relationship throughout the semester. Mentors and mentees may find that the process of mentorship extends far beyond this time - mentor-mentee relationships may last for several years or even a lifetime and become invaluable.

A significant part of the mentoring relationship is based on the honesty and truth that the mentor and mentee share with one another, and it is critical that both participants recognize this. Another critical component is mutual respect and mentors and mentees must treat one another as equals in this relationship. Mentors should reflect a positive and caring attitude towards their mentee at all times. A positive attitude is contagious and so are negative behaviours. For many students, mentors may be one of the few lights shining in a dark place.

A commitment to effective mentoring depends upon a willingness to see mentoring as a dynamic process, oriented to developing a set of shared. The fundamental goal of the student mentor program is to assist new students to successfully make the transition into the University, as early as possible in their university career. Mentors will provide a welcome at orientation, act as a positive role model, be available as a person to contact for support/advice, and generally enhance the experience of the new student. Each mentor may be assigned up to 10 mentees for a semester.

For their participation in the program, student mentors receive a Certificate of Participation, and recognition on their Student Record.

This mentoring program aims to:

- provide social support for students through group based activities;
- offer practical assistance and information; and
- complement existing ECU services.

All new students in Schools that participate in the program should be automatically entered into the mentor program, including those students who are changing courses. Students may then choose to opt out of the program should they wish. Students will be assigned by the Mentor Program Coordinator (MPC) in each School to a Group and Mentor. Mentoring activities commence early in the semester in order to build relationships that may be needed if students begin to struggle later in the semester.

A Blackboard site in each school should be established by the MPC and available to mentors and mentees to support the program.

All costs should be borne by the School involved and mentors should not contribute financially to this program.



## General approach

For most students, the first few weeks at university can be quite stressful. After the initial thrill of being accepted to the program of their choice students are often bombarded with information and acquainted with important processes. There is enrolment to deal with, orientation to experience, course choices to make and a number of other important decisions to consider and make.

Most students are doing exceptionally well if they actually manage to get to the first lecture on the right day, at the right time, in the right place and with the right lecturer. Despite best efforts new students are often lost in a sea of noise, paper and information overload. When this happens it has been shown over and over that the people new students are most inclined to seek advice from are fellow students and who better to help them out than those who have 'been there and done that'. This is the basis of peer mentoring

Our agreed approach to mentoring can be termed an "intrusive approach" and is characterized by sustained efforts to maintain communication and involvement with mentees: encouragement of students to meet with their mentors through letters, phone calls, or emails.

The mentor takes the first step in making contact with the mentee.

Mentors regularly review their contacts and determine which mentees are "missing" and then makes considerable effort to contact the "missing" mentees.

Unlike traditional programs, where mentors and mentees typically are paired one-on-one, in our program one mentor is allocated up to ten mentees.

## The aims of this mentoring program

### For the Mentees:

- To provide a positive first year experience and environment;
- To provide informal supportive networks which enhance academic and social outcomes (friendship, sense of belonging);
- To provide information in a timely and appropriate fashion;
- To reduce uncertainty, stress and anxiety; and
- To provide a climate in which retention is enhanced.

### For the Mentors:

- To provide an opportunity for personal and professional development;
- To provide an opportunity to share and enhance their knowledge of university life;

### For the University:

- To reduce attrition;
- To promote higher levels of first year experience satisfaction;
- To encourage the development of an inclusive, vibrant and supportive culture;
- To reduce academic staff and support service workloads; and
- To provide economic benefits due to improved retention.

This booklet describes the Centre for Learning and Development approach to mentoring and recognises that this is but one way of many by which to proceed. As such the book is designed to help Schools to bring about their own mentoring program.

# Steps in a Mentoring Programme

Step	Action	Processes
1	Form a management team	<p>Involve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the relevant academic program coordinator;</li> <li>• the Mentoring Program Coordinator (MPC)</li> <li>• an administrative support staff member; and</li> <li>• a student representative.</li> </ul> <p>Establish lines of communication with counselling, welfare, academic skills advisors and student administration.</p> <p>Set regular project meetings</p> <p>Establish funding and a budget and set clear guidelines on how costs will be met for various activities.</p>
2	<p>(i) Recruit mentees</p> <p>(ii) Recruit mentors</p>	<p>Opt out system</p> <p>Allocate all enrolled first years into mentor groups using Callista (<a href="http://www.ecu.edu.au/apps/CallistaSMS/">http://www.ecu.edu.au/apps/CallistaSMS/</a>)</p> <p>Establish groups on your BlackBoard site and consider giving these groups (ridiculous or meaningful) names.</p> <p>Posters</p> <p>Letters</p> <p>Personal Invitations at lectures</p> <p>Blackboard</p> <p>Flyer – notice boards, library, lectures</p> <p>Use mentor form from this book</p>
3	Train mentors	<p>Posters</p> <p>Letters</p> <p>Personal Invitations at lectures</p> <p>Blackboard site</p> <p>Flyer - notice boards, library, lectures</p> <p>Use form</p>
4	Construct mentoring schedule	<p>In consultation with management committee</p> <p>Two formal, two informal meetings</p>
5	Check mentoring program	<p>Check that the program is running as it should in consultation with mentors, mentees and management committee</p>
6	Evaluate the mentoring program	<p>Start planning in management meeting early in semester</p> <p>Finalise planning in week term - get material together and distribute evaluate in last week</p>

# Step One

## Form a management team

The first stage is to set up a management team. The management team will oversee the design, implementation and evaluation of the program. It is suggested that the management team should include:

- the relevant academic program coordinator;
- the Mentoring Program Coordinator (MPC) – see below;
- an administrative support staff member; and
- a student representative.

It is also important to establish lines of communication between this team and counselling, welfare, academic skills advisors and student administration.

Once the management team has been established it is necessary to set regular project meetings. Initially we suggest weekly meetings and then less frequently. The purpose of these meetings is:

- to construct the mentoring implementation timetable;
- to discuss issues arising from the implementation of the mentoring program; and
- to make decisions on behalf of the Mentoring program.

One of the first and most critical choices to be made then is in choosing a Mentoring Program Coordinator (MPC). The MPC should be part of the management team. A program manager or coordinator is necessary to run the daily operations of the program - in essence, all that follows in this manual - so the choice is critical.

The MPC needs organisational skills, project management skills, people skills, independence, and an ability to tolerate uncertainty and a rapidly changing environment. Ideally the MPC would be a member of staff but Postgraduate students may also be suitable. They may be more in tune with student needs. It is not recommended that external (to the School) coordinators be appointed.

## Duties of the MPC

### 1. Establish a BlackBoard community site

This can be done by contacting the Centre for Learning and Teaching who will request that you fill in a form. The Centre's contact details are:

clt@ecu.edu.au

Tel: 6304 2554

Room: 18.323 Joondalup

The form is included in this booklet in the forms section and is also available at: <http://www.ecu.edu.au/OnlineLearning/myecu/community-sites>

### 2. Call for Mentors – see Step two

**3. Determine the week, day and time for the initial one day mentor training.** See Step three. Take into account the schedule of Mentor/Mentee meetings and consider assignment due dates. Place the date of this meeting on the BlackBoard site.

**4. Allocate all enrolled first years into mentor groups using Callista** (<http://www.ecu.edu.au/apps/CallistaSMS/>)

(See Step two. Use information on the enrolment forms to match mentees with mentors.)

At this point you need to decide how many mentees there will be in each mentoring group. It is suggested that this number is somewhere between

5 and 10 and will depend upon the number of mentors recruited.

Establish groups on your BlackBoard site and consider giving these groups (ridiculous or meaningful) names. For example a mentoring program run in the School of Education gave their groups the names of influential educationalists: Vygotsky, Friere.

Establishing groups enables students (mentees) to receive emails from the Mentor Program Coordinator and enables Mentors to establish communication with mentees.

**5. Brief all Unit Coordinators** so that they are aware that the program is running. Call for five volunteers amongst these coordinators or wider staff to act as Staff mentors for each group. These staff act as a first point of contact for minor problems that might occur in the peer mentoring process. These staff always will have the option of referring on to the Mentoring Program Coordinator.

**6. The Mentoring Program Coordinator** constructs a list of suitable mentoring activities, based on a reasonable guess or based on hard information gathered during enrolment. Consider specifically asking for this information from the students somehow during the student enrolment process – see the Forms section.

The MPC books people for common activities and venues during designated weeks (see Step four). These activities count as one of the informal meetings. Book enough activities/venues so that all groups can be accommodated during the semester and then allocate groups to each date. Convey information to mentors once selected.

## 7. Monitoring and supervision

After matching the mentor and mentee it is necessary to monitor the development of the relationship. The MPC must take responsibility to check with each mentor to determine how the program is going, helping iron out any difficulties, whether they be about the relationship or simple logistical problems. Meeting best does this with mentors.

Two weeks into the program the MPC needs to make sure mentors have tried and succeeded in contacting each mentee, and they have set up a regular contact time. A reminder email may accomplish this.

## Troubleshooting

What happens if there is a mismatch between the mentor and mentee? Either party in the peer mentoring process may feel that there is a mismatch and if this occurs they should notify the MPC of the situation.

If any conflict becomes apparent it is the role of the MPC to resolve the issue. The cause of the mismatch should be looked at, being careful not to assign blame to either party. If it is a personality clash it may be necessary to team the mentee up with another mentor. However if it is because expectations are not being met, these can be renegotiated between the mentor/mentee and program manager. In this case it is important to make sure each party is clear on the role of a mentor. If what the mentee wants is not what the mentor is there to do, then it is advisable to refer the mentee onto the appropriate persons such as an academic adviser. (If the program manager is uncertain about how to proceed we suggest they attend a conflict resolution session or take it back to the program management team).

# Step Two

## Recruiting mentors - Characteristics of Mentors and Mentees

Before going about the business of actually recruiting mentors, please read through the following sections, which give an indication of the desired characteristics of a peer mentor. These are written so that they may be distributed to potential mentors – that is the writing is addressed to mentors not the MPC

(From <http://gsa.yale.edu/mentoring-week-2007/mentoring-week-2007.html>)

### Awareness

- Mentors should be aware that every student would have different needs and goals. Some students will be more independent than others, and some will need more attention. It is important to know what each individual student expects to get out of the mentoring relationship.
- Mentors should also be aware that students' needs and goals would depend a great deal on the particular student. These needs and goals may change over time. Students should not feel either neglected or singled out.

### Self-Awareness

There are a variety of valid approaches to mentoring. It is a complex and challenging relationship. Some things to consider:

- What have your previous mentoring experiences been like, both as a mentor and as a mentee? What worked well for you; what would you have done differently?
- What kind of mentoring style works best for you?
- How flexible are you? How easily can you adapt your mentoring style to the individual needs of different mentees?
- Do you think of yourself specifically as an academic mentor or as a mentor in a broader sense?
- What are your priorities? What do you expect the student to get out of the mentoring relationship, and what do you expect to get out of the mentoring relationship for yourself?
- Are there certain things that you will require of your mentee in order for the relationship to work? Are these expectations reasonable?
- What are your limits? How much time and energy are you willing to commit to being a mentor?

### Communication

Communication is key in all relationships and the mentoring relationship is no exception. The mentor and mentee must both make their expectations, needs, and limitations known. Sometimes conversations are awkward, but that is still preferable to the problems that arise through lack of communication.

- The mentor should ensure that their mentoring style and goals are clear from the beginning. Be honest. Describe what sort of mentor you are not what sort of mentor you think you're supposed to be.
- Do not be worried that the intelligence of the mentee is being insulted or assume that something "goes without saying." No one has ever complained that something was too clear.

In the mentor/mentee relationship confidentiality and trust are of extreme importance. A mentee should be able to express concerns to a mentor without fear of these statements being repeated to anyone. The mentor should:

- Give honest, concrete constructive criticism in a timely fashion. It is far better for a mentee to hear that there are problems when there is still time to fix them.
- Make sure criticism is concrete so that the mentee knows how to address the problem.
- Give encouragement and positive feedback. "I know you can do it" is also more helpful than many mentors realise.
- Understand that they mentoring future mentors. Your mentees develop their own mentoring styles in part by emulating you.
- Show students how to make the best use of their time. How does the mentor use their time each day? On a particular project? In life?

The variety of roles in mentoring makes peer mentoring a rich and complex relationship. For that relationship to be rewarding, it is important that its parameters be discussed with care, and reconsidered periodically over the course of each mentor's time in his or her program.

### Becoming a mentor

Before registering for the University Mentoring Programme, please be aware that the resource, which is most commonly needed, is time. Once accepted a mentor will work with up to ten other students.

This Mentoring Programme is mentee driven. Once registered through the form in this book between five and ten mentees will be allocated to a prospective mentor. Mentor registrations will expire after one semester and mentors will need to reregister.

After registration the mentor can make an initial contact with the mentees. This could take the form of an initial phone call or email leading to an initial meeting (as described below in Mentor Duties) with mentees. Discussion at this initial meeting will be about mutual expectations, roles, when, where and how often to meet and whether both students and Mentor feel they can work together.

### Duties of a Mentor

Mentors need to:

1. Make a one semester commitment;
2. Attend peer mentor training;
3. Be a role model;
4. Contact mentees during orientation week and if possible meet with them;
5. Conduct an initial informal meeting with mentees in the first two weeks of semester;
6. Conduct an initial formal meeting with mentees in the third week of semester;
7. Organise and conduct one other formal meeting during the semester;
8. Organise and conduct at least one other informal activity during the semester;
9. Meet with the Mentor Program Coordinator every three weeks to discuss the program and issues; and
10. Complete an evaluation of the program at the end of the semester.

## Our students

Students in our mentoring programs may be seeking a relationship similar to the one they have with their bank, or their telephone company. This relationship implies easy access, convenience, no queues and superior customer service! Students may not necessarily be interested in such things as sport programs and health services. They will be interested in social and emotional interactions that make the transfer of knowledge and skills possible.

## Expectations

When a student meets with a mentor they may wish to seek assistance with campus concerns or questions, such as studying techniques, campus services, general "how to" questions; or inquire about community resources, such as day care, CentreLink or housing,.

Mentors might choose to specifically address areas such as goal setting; deadlines; campus logistics, financial aid applications, plans of study, poor marks and possible remedies; career exploration; and provide a general element of care and connectedness.

- Mentees should be aware that every mentor would have a different mentoring style. Some will prefer a more formal relationship, and others a more casual one.
- Mentees should be aware that their mentor might adapt his/her mentoring style as the relationship progresses.
- Mentees should be aware that if their mentors are mentoring multiple students, the mentor might tailor his/her mentoring style to the perceived needs of each individual. Giving extra attention to certain students at a particular time or for a particular reason does not necessarily signal favouritism or neglect.

Every student will have different reasons for entering into a mentoring relationship. Here are some questions, which may engender discussion with mentees in the first meeting with a mentor and can serve to shape the relationship between mentor and mentees.

- What kind of mentor do you need? Do you need someone who will give you deadlines and lots of advice, or do you need someone who will wait for you to take the initiative?
- Do you want a mentor who is just like you, or do you want someone who is a bit different?
- In what areas do you need mentoring?
- What are your goals, both short-term and long-term? Bear in mind that if you don't know what they are, then your mentor probably won't either.

## The Mentors

The University is looking for students who feel they have the appropriate level of experience, personal and professional qualities and would be willing to act as mentors. Mentoring involves academic skills, attitudes, interaction, trust, communication, and student empowerment so potential mentors need understandings in these areas.

A mentor is a full or part time student, in a more senior year than the mentee and knows their own individual aspirations, needs, circumstances and expected outcomes from University life.

Ideally, mentors should have been in the University long enough to know how the University works and have their own preferred field of specialism well established. A mentor is not expected to be an expert!

The mentor registration will expire after each semester and after that the mentor will need to re-register.

If a mentor wishes to make him or herself unavailable for a period of time, whether because they are currently in a mentoring relationship or have other commitments, they will be able to indicate this in their registration.

Prospective mentors with little or no previous experience of mentoring will be required to attend a workshop (above), which has been designed to support the University Mentoring Programme.

# Mentor Recruitment and Registration/Informing staff

SO... you have decided you need a mentoring program in your school. You have established a management team, appointed a program manager and secured the funding that you need (you do have a budget?). The next step is to inform the staff of your program.

## Informing staff

A memo may be sent to all staff outlining the nature and purpose of the program. This memo should identify the program goals, members of the management team and the program manager.

It is important to advertise to the staff before the start of semester, as they may be able to provide information or services to some aspect of the program. The program needs the support of the staff, so they need to be continually informed about the progress. Other strategies might include briefing staff at staff meetings, email updates and invitations to the social events.

## Selecting mentors – for the MPC and management committee

The best program in the world will amount to nothing if it is unable to attract high quality mentors. Timing is everything!

Start advertising for the program approximately 4 months before mentors and mentees will be matched. For example if you plan to have mentors and mentees matched before orientation then it would be necessary to start advertising and recruiting mentors in September of the previous year.

Some advertising strategies include:

- posters made and placed around the Faculty/School/Department asking for students to participate in the program as a mentor;
- letters to later year students inviting them to participate;
- personal invitations at lectures to later year students.

The advertisements should outline the purpose of the program and the benefits. It may be useful to highlight the benefits mentors will get from the program.

Call for mentors by putting an announcement on the BlackBoard Community. The announcement might read like this:

*University can be like being in a dark room full of furniture. Many people have already gone through it and know where things are. Could you help first year students find where things are, or better still, to turn on the light?*

*The School of . . . . . is calling for expressions of interest from Second or Third year students interested in acting as a Mentor to a group of First year students. This interesting and prestigious position will involve you:*

*11. Making a one semester commitment*

*12. Attending mentor training.*

*13. Mentoring!*

*For more details contact the Mentoring Program Coordinator (Name, telephone, email) and/or fill in the Mentor Form and submit to the Mentoring Program Coordinator (Name, telephone, email).*

*Closing date:*

A flyer should be prepared with much the same information as above. Distribute the flyer around campus, on noticeboards, in libraries and in lectures.

It is a huge advantage to your program to be able to recruit mentors during this period so that they are available for Orientation. *(See also the section on constructing a mentoring schedule for more ideas about this).*

Not all students who volunteer to become mentors will be appropriate. With the best of intentions, some will lack the social skills; others will be motivated purely by self-interest. Some selection procedure is absolutely essential.

Students who are interested in becoming mentors should be required to fill out a form highlighting their academic studies, volunteer work and/or work experience (See forms section). Remember this must all be done in the semester prior to the implementation of the program.

It is recommend that students who want to become mentors are interviewed. There are a number of criteria you can use to assist you make a decision whether the student may be a good mentor. For example it is important to establish:

- what they think the mentor role is;
- what skills they think are necessary to be an effective mentor;
- why they want to be involved in the program; and
- how much time they have to give to the program.

Interviews should be divided between the management team to save time.

If there are a large number of potential mentors a one-on-one interview may be impractical. Consider using group interviews where you still can gauge individual characteristics.

In choosing mentors it is useful to look for those people who think the program is worthwhile. Students need a good understanding of what mentoring involves and need to believe the program is a great idea - one that they wished they had access to when starting university.

Someone who thinks that the role of a mentor is more like that of a personal tutor should be avoided. Also someone who is only in the program for what they can get out of it should likewise be avoided.

A Mentoring Registration Form is provided in the Forms Section of this book to enable you to register mentors.

## Step Three

### Mentor Training

New mentors should receive up to one day of training. Training should be provided as soon as the mentors have been selected. It should occur prior to the end of year before the recruitment of mentees. It may be useful to run the training in October/November (before student exams) and then have a refresher session before university orientation day the following year (early February). It is essential that all mentors are trained and prepared by the time first year students start enrolling.

Training is best spread over three sessions (two sessions on one day and a possible later one session follow up) and the information should be developed into an information kit for mentors to refer to throughout the program.

Training should include elements like:

- an overview of the program and Mentor's role;
- description of the mentoring approach;
- running interesting mentoring sessions;
- introduction of program staff;
- training on mentor responsibilities;
- limits and boundaries of the role;
- understanding student development and transition;
- Indicators of at-risk;
- key sources of help for students;
- discussion of stress management and dispute resolution;
- cultural diversity;
- using mentor experience in a future career;
- evaluation processes;
- mentor self-care
- practical, housekeeping stuff; and
- advice about academic advising, financial aid and time management.

## Step Four

### Planning Informal Activities

Each mentor should plan two informal activities as part of their mentoring duties, one of which is conducted within the first two weeks of semester.

These activities should be enjoyable for everyone. The purpose of these activities is to allow mentors and mentees to get to know each other in a friendly environment where questions can be easily asked. Students are more likely to ask questions and get to know each other in this kind of environment than elsewhere. These activities should help to foster relationships that will be helpful and gratifying to all.

In order to get the ball rolling, an activity should be planned for the first two weeks of the seminar beginning. This is the hardest time for many new students. It is crucial that these students become familiar with the mentor as a person and a resource for any questions that they have on how to deal with a variety of different scenarios. Waiting until the end of the seminar will defeat the purpose of the activities.

### Tips that will make for a good activity

#### 1. Keep costs to a minimum.

Come up with activities that are inexpensive, but enjoyable.

Organizing a group study session is always an option – but only if it comes with pizza and a DVD!

#### 2. Choosing a suitable location

Getting to the activity could be difficult for mentees if the location is not thoughtfully chosen. **Mentors are not allowed to organize activities at their places of residence.** Always try to find a location so that everyone can get to and from the event by public transportation, if necessary. A sausage sizzle at University can work as well as most activities.

#### 3. Plan meeting times to suit the group

The meeting time can be a major obstacle. At least one person will always have a conflict with the time suggested. However, there are obvious times to avoid planning something. For example, days before an assessment is due are not a good time to plan things, unless it is a study session. Also, if the mentor group has a lot of commuters, having them come back to a particular location might be a problem.

#### 4. Plan activities of interest to all backgrounds

This goes without saying. Think of the cultural topics. Talk to other people to see if they have any suggestions. The activities are not about the mentor's interests, but are about connecting the students to the mentor and each other. The activities are merely a vehicle for doing that.

#### 5. Suggestions for activities

- Meet on campus (utilise the meeting rooms in the library?);
- Meet on campus – the coffee shop?;
- Lunch on campus - the coffee shop?;
- Dinner on a Friday night;
- A Saturday sporting event;
- Plan a study session before a major assessment;
- Go to a free exhibition at a gallery, museum, . . . ;
- Go to a movie;
- Go to a movie after a dinner at a food court; or
- Meet at a heated pool.

## The schedule

During orientation week Mentors should meet with their groups for activities, if possible. If mentors are available and groups established then groups could be rotated every 15 minutes through activities like a campus tour, library tour, coffee shop and gym. Groups talked through difficult or problematic units. Staff mentors could rotate with groups. Mentors could set up informal contact procedures with mentees if desired, such as FaceBook.

Here is a suggested schedule of activities that could be considered for use in a School's mentoring program. In addition to the informal meetings described above, mentors are also required to conduct two more formal meeting with their mentees.

Week	Who	What
<b>1</b>	MPC	If mentors have not been selected already then advertise for mentors amongst 2 <sup>nd</sup> and third year students. Supplying Course Coordinator/ Unit coordinators with a PowerPoint slide that displays the call for mentors, outlines the basic duties and benefits, could do this. Should ask that it be shown during lectures in Week 1.
	MPC and/or member of the management committee	Consider making a personal visit to lectures to talk about the program.
	MPC and/or member of the management committee	All mentees are advised of their mentor group. They are advised through student email, through BlackBoard group email, through visits to lectures or tutorials or by placing lists outside common lecture theatres – or any combination of the above. All communications should include the MPC contact details.
	MPC and/or member of the management committee	Allocate a room or area suitable for mentee drop in space. Book this area through the usual timetable booking arrangements and protect it. Roster each mentor to a specific time in the room. Advertise the location of the room widely, using the means mentioned above.
	MPC and/or member of the management committee	Advise mentors of the roster.
	MPC and/or member of the management committee	Organise mentor training. Book room, check facilities, organise refreshments, construct agenda and advise mentors of location and time. Organise evaluation sheets. Contact facilitator and discuss requirements for the day. Collect any material from the facilitator that needs distribution, organise copies and place on BlackBoard.
	MPC and/or member of the management committee	MPC to confirm activities for first informal meeting of mentors and mentees, with mentors. Can be done on the training day. Mentors then advise groups of chosen activity, time and venue for meeting via group email on BlackBoard. All groups do this activity in same timeslot, if possible. As this is an informal meeting consider some intergroup competition, possible sporting.
	<i>NOTE</i>	<i>Of course all of this could be done well before week one if mentors are recruited ahead of time.</i>
<b>2</b>	MPC selects trainer	Mentor training (if not conducted already)
	Mentors, mentees	First informal meeting, as scheduled in week one.
	Mentors, mentees	Mentors plan next meeting (formal) with mentees – for week four.
	MPC	Make sure mentors have tried and succeeded in contacting each mentee.
<b>3</b>	Mentor	Informal contact with mentees through BlackBoard, Facebook or drop in at Mentor office.
<b>4</b>	Mentors, mentees	First formal meeting with mentees. Discuss University related topics. Discuss ideas for next activity. Consider planning mentoring activities for outside of University – sport, movies, etc. Encourage informal contact.
<b>5</b>	Mentor	Informal contact with mentees through BlackBoard, Facebook or drop in at Mentor office.
	MPC	Contact mentors to confirm date, time and location of next mentoring informal meeting.
<b>6</b>	Mentor, mentees	Next informal meeting. Plan next formal meeting
	MPC	Check that the program is going OK by seeking feedback from mentors via email.
<b>7</b>	Mentor	Advise mentees and MPC of time, date and location of next formal meeting
<b>8</b>	Mentor, mentee	Second formal mentoring meeting
<b>9</b>	Mentor, mentee	Informal contact through BlackBoard, Facebook or drop in at Mentor office.
	MPC	Contact mentors to confirm date, time and location of next mentoring informal meeting.
<b>10</b>	MPC, management committee, mentors	Plan evaluation of the program
	Mentor, mentee	Informal contact with mentees through BlackBoard, Facebook or drop in at Mentor office.
	MPC, mentors	Plan some culminating event to officially windup program. This could be a formal occasion and should involve all Mentors, Mentees, staff and food!
<b>11</b>	Mentor, mentee	Next informal meeting
	MPC, mentors	Begin evaluation of the program
<b>12</b>	MPC, mentors	Conclude evaluation.
	MPC, mentors, management committee, mentees	Culminating event.

# Additional Resources

Most of the information presented in this section is best directed to the person responsible for mentor training. However it may be useful for the MPC and for the Mentor to be familiar with the content.

## Mentor training

Training should be provided as soon as possible after the Mentors are selected. Ideally it should occur prior to the end of the year (or first semester for a program commencing in second semester) before the recruitment of mentees. Training could be provided in the period before student exams with a refresher course in early February or July for second semester programs. Mentors must be trained!

At a minimum training should include learning communication skills, dealing with other people's emotions and recognising stress. However it also needs to include information on the role of mentors, the mentoring relationship, School/Departmental processes and relevant policies, university services and resources, and so on. Topics to be covered should be discussed by the

A brief description of possible topics is provided below. In each of the sections we have offered some tips and ideas that we have found useful. It is by no means an exhaustive list and you will almost certainly think of others. If you use outside trainers they will have their own ideas as well.

## Introduction to peer mentoring

Hopefully the information and issues discussed in this manual will make it easy enough to do an introductory session. It should be useful to combine information and an overview of the training sessions and their purpose with a reflection on the mentors' own experiences when starting university.

Why not begin with a brainstorming session on the mentors' own experiences?

How did they feel when they first arrived at university?

What did they need to know?

What did they find scary?

## Role of the mentor

As we emphasised right at the beginning of this manual, mentoring is not tutoring. Make it very clear to your mentors that they are there as a friendly support to a fellow student, not as someone who can help them do their work.

Again, brainstorm ideas about what their role could be (a variation on this could be to ask what their role is and what it is not)

Discuss the strengths and weaknesses of each role. Add this information to the manual provided to the mentors.

When mentors reflect in the introductory session on their own experiences in first year, the different types of support new university students need should become clear. Discussing the ability and responsibility of mentors to refer students on to formal university services when appropriate can help establish role boundaries.

## University services

Obviously the mentors were selected in view of their knowledge of university services and resources, however there are some administrative procedures about which they might not be aware. Some understanding of, and contact details for, services such as the student counsellor, student administration, library, student guild and computing should be provided.

The mentor's manual could contain relevant brochures, publications, policies and paperwork from the various services. A short talk from a representative of the services will put a 'face' to the service. Each representative should provide details of how to refer students to their service.

## Communication skills

A good mentor is a good listener. Mentors should be introduced to, and practice, the skills of active listening. The mentor must be able to hear what the student is saying without judging or interpreting. The mentor must also be able to convey empathy to the student and be comfortable with their mentee expressing emotions, such as anxiety. Body language is another way of communicating that the mentor should be aware of in their interactions with their mentee their own body language and that of their mentee.

In the training session, the mentors should be reminded that the initial goals are to get their mentee to feel at ease with them and build rapport. These will not necessarily happen at the first meeting, so they should take it easy and avoid any criticism in the early stages.

Some important points to convey to mentors in the training include:

- Good communication means being able to read both verbal and non verbal communication
- Do not preach; in other words do not tell the student what to do, help them to explore options and decide for themselves
- Don't be judgmental - it's no good telling a student who has failed an assessment point that they will have to pull their socks up and work harder. A conversation about time management, planning etc and perhaps a referral to the Academic Skills Adviser will be more supportive and beneficial; and
- Be assertive: if your mentors are successful they may find that they themselves receive referrals (i.e. their mentee may refer other students to them for assistance). In these cases it is important to assertively refer them, to the project manager who will match them with a mentor of their own. (See also the section on self-care).

Cross cultural communication skills may also need to be provided if there is a mix of cultural backgrounds with different communication norms.

Why not invite a representative from your cultural education unit (if there is one) to talk to the mentors about cultural issues. Alternatively someone from your international students office may be available.

They may also be prepared to act as advisers to the mentors on an on-going basis.

## Coping with stress

Mentors will know well enough that studying at university can be highly stressful at times. In some way or another, stress is probably going to be a factor in any mentees withdrawing from university. Therefore it is useful for a mentor to be able to identify when a mentee is stressed and to be able to help them if the need arises.

The training should remind mentors of the different ways stress can be expressed - verbally, behaviourally and physiologically so they are more likely to notice the signs when they encounter them. Mentors should also be asked to identify factors that may predispose their mentee to stress, such as having commitments outside of study, being nervous about computers or it being exam time.

Some signs of stress that mentors may notice:

- the mentee may report that they have a poor appetite;
- they are not sleeping well; and
- they may notice that the mentee is irritable, easily distracted and showing other emotions such as crying or becoming easily angered.

Some of the most valuable information mentors may be able to pass on to mentees is about the management of stress. The MPC should consider giving mentors a small but effective 'toolkit' of suggestions that they can share with their mentee towards the beginning of semester when it is still not too late! The 'toolkit' might include tips on time management (school leavers may not be used to diarising), some information on the benefits of regular exercise and relaxation as preventers of stress and other factors such as the tendency for coffee to exacerbate stress. Your mentors will probably also benefit from a little refresher course on this topic.

Why not brainstorm the ways in which people deal with stress?

Be warned someone will inevitably say 'drinking'! It's good for a laugh but not for dealing with stress.

Teach mentors how to identify 'catastrophising' thoughts and challenge them. For example if a mentee fails an assignment they may see it as the end of the world. "That's it! I'm hopeless! I'll never pass uni now, I might as well just pack it in now". Rather, mentors could encourage mentees to see that while failing is not a good thing, it's not the end of the world, and to explore strategies for completing assessments more effectively in the future.

## The mentoring relationship

It is important that the mentor keeps in regular contact with their mentee even if the mentee doesn't ask for help. This contact lets the mentee know there is always someone there if needed. We have found it important for the mentor and mentee to set up at their first meeting a regular contact time, whether it is face-to-face or by telephone. This should be an explicit request of mentors, and it may help to remind them of it just before the training session ends.

Ground rules for the mentor/mentee relationship should be set. These can include a small but essential list of relatively non-negotiable rules including items such as the role of the mentor and confidentiality issues. The role of the mentor has already been discussed above. Items on confidentiality may include:

- Confidentiality of mentor phone numbers - mentors must not hand out other mentors' phone numbers; mentees must not hand out their mentor's phone number,
- Residential addresses - mentors and mentees may be given suburb localities but not specific addresses; it is preferred that mentors and mentees not give them to each other either (although there should be some flexibility allowed).

Explicitly labelling these as 'ground rules' and providing your mentors with a copy of them should help reinforce their importance.

Other ways to help the mentor/mentee relationship are:

- Clarify the needs of the mentee,
- Set goals of the relationship,
- Make sure those goals are reviewed,
- Review the relationship - how is it going? Are goals being met?
- Be open and honest.

## Ethical issues

A mentee may tell their mentor sensitive information. Although any issues discussed between the mentor and mentee are confidential, if a problem arises that the mentor cannot deal with they must see their supervisor. The mentee must be made aware of this possibility at the beginning of the relationship. In the training, ensure the mentor knows they must obtain the mentee's permission before they discuss an issue with the program manager. Whilst this is generally true, it is important for the mentor to understand and tell their mentee about the limits to confidentiality. If the mentee indicates that they may self-harm or harm others the mentor is obliged to report this to the program manager.

Mentors should be made aware that their position of some authority confers a power differential on the relationship. In any mentor/mentee relationship, the mentor must take responsibility for conducting themselves in accordance with the ethical guidelines (see URL below).

Some relevant guidelines may include:

- The avoidance of the invasion of privacy;
- Maintaining confidentiality;
- The avoidance of any form of exploitation; and
- Being clear about the roles in the relationship.

A good place to start with ethical guidelines may be with your own professional body or group or the university documents pertinent to this matter such as the Staff/Student charter of rights (<http://www.ecu.edu.au/student/charter/>)

## Conflict resolution

In any relationship, conflict will arise from time to - time. Mentors should be provided with models of conflict resolution to help them deal with issues that may arise in the mentor/mentee relationship.

Most conflict arises when people adopt positions (e.g. for or against something) and then steadfastly defend that position. Mentors should look for the needs that underlie the position their mentee may adopt. For example a mentee may take the position that: "My mentor is never around I can never contact them!" The mentor could take the position: "What do you mean? Yes I am. I was home last night and you never called". Alternatively they could look for the need that underlies the position. The mentee may really be saying: "I am anxious at the moment and really need someone to talk to".

Another source of conflict that the mentor may mediate is that between the student and other people within the University. The mentor may point out, to the mentee experiencing difficulties, the right people to approach within the student support services, as well as lending a sympathetic ear themselves.

## Mentor self-care

It is not the intention of this program to produce large numbers of successful mentees, while leaving behind a trail of burned out mentors. Encourage the mentors to manage their own time well so that their own mentoring does not become a burden. From our experience, however, the mentees are likely to place relatively small time demands on their mentors.

Setting boundaries between mentor and mentee is another important part of self-care. Some mentors, for example, do not want to be called after a certain hour at night or before a certain hour in the morning. The mentor should think about boundaries they might want to set and discuss them in their first meeting with their mentee. Other aspects of self-care for the mentor include:

- Do not make other people's problems your own;
- Do not do for students what they can do for themselves;
- Learn to say "No";
- Do not lend what you can't afford to lose (e.g. essays, money, car, etc)
- Be aware of your own limitations;
- Know when to refer on;
- Find support-peer, family, supervisor, project manager/team.

## Who should provide the training?

It is important that as a trainer that you have expertise in the area. As noted earlier you may want to invite speakers from student services (e.g. academic skills advisor, student counsellor, welfare officer, etc.) to provide information to the mentors, on their services.

The content to be included should be negotiated between the PMC and trainer, however the trainer is generally responsible for their own presentation.

# Mentor Registration Form

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_

Gender \_\_\_\_\_ Contact Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Course \_\_\_\_\_ Year \_\_\_\_\_

Why do you wish to become a mentor?

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What attributes do you bring to the role?

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Please nominate one member of staff from your School who is prepared to act as a referee for you

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

If accepted into the program I agree to:

Maintain confidentiality;

Be available for mentor training; and

Complete the duties of a mentor as described above.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

# Mentee Registration Form

(Even though the mentoring program should be an opt out program this form might still be useful in gathering information from mentees to assist with matching with mentors. In this case every mentee should fill one in. It can serve as a recruitment form for opt in programs).

**Yes** I am interested in participating in this program.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Contact \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Are you Full Time or Part time \_\_\_\_\_

Are you an international student \_\_\_\_\_

Age group      17-25              26-35              36-45              45+

We would like to find you a Mentor with similar interests so tell us a little about yourself –  
Interests, Hobbies, Sporting Clubs, Anything unusual about you...

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Add anything else that you think might be good for a potential Mentor to know:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

I give permission for my email address: \_\_\_\_\_ to be used for communication in this program.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Please leave this form in the box to be found at:

## Peer Mentoring Advertisement - Mentors

University can be like being in a dark room full of furniture. Many people have already gone through it and know where things are. Could you help first year students find where things are, or better still, to turn on the light?

The School of .....is calling for expressions of interest from Second or Third year students interested in acting as a Mentor to a group of First year students. This interesting and prestigious position will involve you:

- Making a one semester commitment
- Attending mentor training.
- Mentoring!

For more details contact the Mentoring Program Coordinator (Name, telephone, email) and/or fill in the Mentor Form and submit to the Mentoring Program Coordinator (Name, telephone, email).

Closing date:

## Mentor Interview Schedule

Preamble

Introduce interviewers and give background of the program. Indicate that all potential mentors are being interviewed to gauge suitability end time commitments.

Possible questions

- Why do you want to be involved in the peer mentor program?
- What role do you see the mentor playing to first year students?
- What skills do you think are necessary to be a mentor?
- Approximately how much time are you willing to give this program?
- What activities/studies are you involved in this semester? (Gauge availability)
- Tell us in 30 seconds why we should choose you to be a mentor
- Have you any questions you may like to ask?

Thank the potential mentor. Give an indication of when they may hear about their involvement and when and where training may take place. You may have a choice of training times so remember to record the potential mentor availability.

Training Availability:

Rating (on a five point scale):

# Activity Feedback Form

*It is important that you fill in the details below after your activities.*

*This form must be returned to the Mentoring Program Coordinator*

## Activity Information

1. Location \_\_\_\_\_

2. Please check off the nature of your activity  Academic  or Social

3. Please list 3 things you accomplished during the activity:

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## Attendance

6. Please list the names and group numbers of those that attended.

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7. Times:

Start \_\_\_\_\_

Finish \_\_\_\_\_

Comments

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## MyECU Community Sites

### Guide and request form

### What are community sites?

Community sites are structured web sites set up in MyECU. They are organised separately from the unit sites set up for online unit delivery that are widely used at ECU, but operate in exactly the same way.

Anyone with a current HR contract at ECU can request and maintain two types of MyECU community site:

#### **Award Sites**

Automatic population of a site based on award enrolment. An award community site can be useful if you want to communicate online with a cohort of students taking a particular course code or set of course codes.

At the moment community sites have no connection to the units sites a student may be enrolled in as far as MyECU is concerned. The award community site is intended for course wide communication and community-building including for example course relevant information, forums, a blog or posting jobs or events.

**NB Only currently contracted ECU Staff and currently enrolled ECU Students can access MyECU.**

#### **Ad-Hoc sites**

Manual enrolment for sites for any other purpose. An ad-hoc community site could be useful if you have a need to communicate online with a group of ECU students or staff. These can also be run by students with authority from an appropriate School.

### Why would you want one?

- If you previously ran a site for testing or training then you may now need an ad-hoc community site setting up.
- You want to communicate with students enrolled in an award rather than on a unit by unit basis.
- You run or are a member of a research group and want a place for online discussion or sharing of documents.
- You run or are involved in a committee or working party and want a place for online discussion or sharing of documents.
- You are organising a conference or project – you could post up the schedule, display audio and video, discussion boards, a blog or a wiki or post up papers.
- You organise a social or sporting group at ECU and want to communicate with members online.

## How to go about requesting a community site

### *Community Sites Required Information*

Firstly you should find out if there is already an existing site fulfilling the same purpose.

*How to search:*

*In MyECU go to community catalogue > search using course code > then by the name you are thinking of calling the site.*

If an award site is required, **what course codes are to be included?** You can include up to 15 course codes in an award site but at least one currently offered course code is required for an award community site.

**Will the site get authorised?** Authority should be sought from your Head of School or Line Manager. If the site is to be run by Students then authority from a School sponsor should be sought.

**Who will administer the site?** For an Award site at least one member of staff with a current HR contract is required to be the "leader" or administrator of the site. A list of other staff members' full names is also required if you are to have help administering the site. Students can administer an ad-hoc site.

**Full site name.** What will the site be called? A search in the MyECU community catalogue should identify if you need to distinguish your site from a similarly named one.

**Site Description** - We require a full description as this will appear in MyECU in the community catalogue.

**Site Rationale** - We require a descriptive rationale to justify the creation of the community site.

**Site Duration** - the default is continuous, but can be set to be a range of dates or for a fixed period (ie a number of weeks).

**Enrolment Type:** Award sites will be populated automatically, but ad-hoc sites can be set up for self-enrolment or enrolment via email authorisation.

**NB** at the moment if an award site is required, a development site can be set up so that students will not see the site under development. Once ready, the content can be copied over to the award site and made live for student access.

Once you have decided upon this information, complete the form attached to request the creation of the community site.

Complete and submit this form to have a community site created in MyECU. Please read the guide to community sites before submitting this form.

**Please submit the form via the following methods:**

1. By Fax: Please fax to (08) 6304 2344 attention of R Aspinall - CLT.
2. By internal mail: R. Aspinall, Room 18.310b, ECU Joondalup Campus.
3. By Email – **scanned** copy of this form **with the authority signature** to [r.aspinall@ecu.edu.au](mailto:r.aspinall@ecu.edu.au)

You will be notified by email once the community is created.

**Requested Information**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Staff ID: \_\_\_\_\_  
Position: \_\_\_\_\_  
School: \_\_\_\_\_  
Faculty: \_\_\_\_\_  
Administrative Centre: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Authorising Signature – usually the Head of School / Line Manager**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Position: \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**NB** for student-run sites authority will need to be sought from a sponsor at School level.

**Please fill in the appropriate sections below:**

1. Describe the main function that the organisation will serve:
- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Award support community  | <input type="checkbox"/> Project community |
| <input type="checkbox"/> School based community   | <input type="checkbox"/> Club              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Training or testing site | <input type="checkbox"/> (Other) _____     |

**Additional supporting information:**

**NB:** This information helps to determine who should be enrolled in the community site and how they will be enrolled.

2. Suggestions for a name for the community site to be listed in the community catalogue in MyECU:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Suggestions for a description for the community site to be listed in the community catalogue in MyECU:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. Nominate the staff member/s who will be administering the community site (include the person completing this form, if applicable). At least one member should be the Leader of the site, other options are Community Builders and Assistants. Please add more to a separate sheet if necessary.

Staff Username: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Role: \_\_\_\_\_

Staff Username: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Role: \_\_\_\_\_

Staff Username: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Role: \_\_\_\_\_

Staff Username: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Role: \_\_\_\_\_

Staff Username: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Role: \_\_\_\_\_

Staff Username: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Role: \_\_\_\_\_

5. Enrolment options of how staff and students become members of this community (you may select more than one):

Automated enrolment – please supply one or more course codes.  
Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Self-enrol - (The self-enrol option works by allowing MyECU users to enrol themselves in the community site – NB if chosen, the self-enrol option will be accessible by everyone at ECU until turned off.)

- If you wish you can request a range of dates for self-enrolment so that the option gets switched off automatically.  
Start Date: \_\_\_\_\_ End date: \_\_\_\_\_

Controlled/manual enrolment – please attach the list of staff or student names and ECU usernames to this form. NB this is generally used for ad-hoc sites and will be only viable for smaller community groups. Administrators of the site will also be able to enrol participants to the site themselves so there will be a degree of manual management of enrolments involved.

6. What is the anticipated lifespan of the community site:

Fixed term: \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_       Ongoing (with review of activities)

STUDENT CENTRAL

[www.ecu.edu.au/student/homepage/central.php](http://www.ecu.edu.au/student/homepage/central.php)

BUNBURY CAMPUS

Telephone: (08) 9780 7856

E-mail: [student.admin.bu@ecu.edu.au](mailto:student.admin.bu@ecu.edu.au)

JOONDALUP, AND MOUNT LAWLEY CAMPUSES

Telephone: (08) 6304 2000

E-mail: [student.central@ecu.edu.au](mailto:student.central@ecu.edu.au)

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