

Apprenticeships at UWTSD:

A Guide for Mentors



University of Wales
Trinity Saint David

Apprenticeships at UWTSD:

A Guide for Mentors

1. What is an Apprenticeship?

An apprenticeship is the combination of taking on practical training in a job, whilst gaining a qualification that meets an approved national standard. It is a way for individuals to earn while they learn, gaining valuable skills and knowledge in a specific job role. Apprentices gain the technical knowledge, practical experience and wider skills needed for their immediate job and future career. An apprenticeship programme will support an apprentice through a wide mix of learning in the workplace and formal off-the-job training, with the opportunity to practice new skills in a real work environment.

UWTSD Degree Apprenticeships are for new or existing members of staff, whom have completed Level 3 qualifications. The formal off-the-job training element of the apprenticeship is provided by an approved training provider. Apprentices will typically spend 20% of their time conducting guided learning with the training provider. The guided learning will vary, depending upon the apprenticeship, and may include: day release; block release; online learning; projects; and work place learning.

Apprenticeship Standards (England) or Frameworks (Wales) outline what an apprentice will be doing throughout the programme and the skills, knowledge and behaviours that they will acquire during the programme. It is important that their job role gives them the right opportunities to meet the standard or framework over the duration of the apprenticeship.

Apprentices have a contract of employment which is long enough for them to complete the apprenticeship successfully, this can last up to five years depending on the level and complexity of the programme.

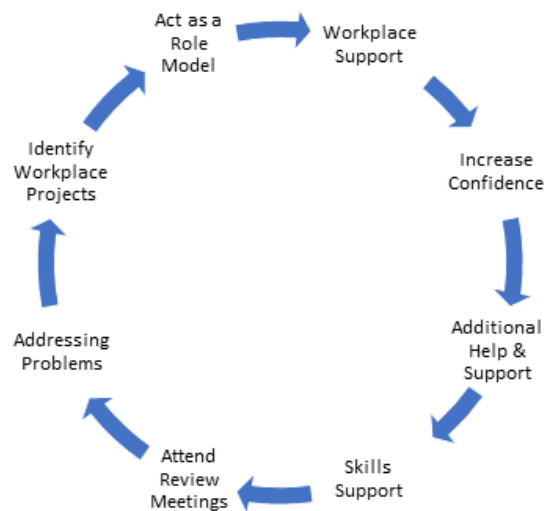
2. The Purpose & Role of Mentoring

Mentoring is an important part of an apprenticeship and can provide much needed additional work-place support to an apprentice, helping them understand their role in the organisation, develop their career path, and provide a listening ear if they're facing any problems and challenges.

The role of the mentor is particularly important for apprentices. The relationship provides additional support, guidance and pastoral care through the programme, outside of the more formal line management relationship.

Good mentoring helps people to learn and develop. Mentoring has the potential to make a valuable contribution to apprentices in terms of their personal and professional development and to the overall development of the organisation.

The mentor is not here to replace the apprentice's line manager, instead they will provide an additional supportive resource.



3. Meetings and Reviews

As well as agreeing the practical arrangements and identifying objectives for the mentoring relationship, typically, first meetings allow the mentor and apprentice to get to know each other better, when this takes place can depend on whether the apprentice is existing staff or a new recruit. The apprenticeship programme at UWTSD offers the learner an Apprentice Liaison Officer to help support them throughout their studies. The Mentor will be invited to take part in learner reviews with the Apprentice Liaison Officer to best keep track of the progress of the apprentice.

So that the first meeting of the mentoring relationship is as productive as possible it is useful for the mentor to prepare.

Here are some questions mentors may ask themselves in preparation for the first meeting:

- What are the most important lessons I have learned from my career experiences?
- How can I utilise this learning in my contribution to the mentoring relationship?
- What kinds of mentoring (or equivalent) experiences have been most helpful to me and why?
- What can I offer someone I mentor?
- What are my major strengths, skills, knowledge and abilities?

- How much time, effort and enthusiasm can I realistically devote to working with someone like this?
- What do I think my mentee should contribute to the effort?

Getting To Know Each Other

There are many topics of conversation that can lead to a comfortable environment. Here are some key questions you may wish to consider using to open out the conversation during the first meeting:

- What do you think your key strengths and skills are?
- What skills, knowledge and experience do you feel you would like/need to develop and how do you see the mentoring relationship helping you to do that?
- What do you think might most hinder your success?
- What knowledge, skills and abilities do you feel I possess that would most benefit you?
- What do you want to know from me?
- What do you want/need from me?
- What information do you have for me on how I can best help you or better understand what you need?
- What do you think we need to do to make this mentorship work?
- What is the best way to give you feedback?

4. The Mentoring Contract

A mentoring contract is a simple, yet critical, means of stating the purpose and boundaries of a mentoring partnership. As part of your initial discussion regarding how you are going to work together you should agree the duration and frequency of meetings, ground rules, roles and responsibilities, mutual expectations, review points, duration of the mentoring relationship itself and the importance of confidentiality. We would recommend that the mentee takes primary responsibility for documenting the output of this discussion, using the Sample Mentoring Contract as a template, however, it is important for the mentor to be aware of these key areas to consider in order to ensure that all areas are discussed and agreed during the first few meetings.

See Sample Mentoring Contract >

Mutual expectations (i.e. what do we each expect from the other?):	
When shall we review progress? How long with the mentoring relationship last?	
How often will we meet? When and where will we meet, and for how long?	
What will be the ground rules for our discussions (e.g. Confidentiality, openness etc.?)	
Who will be responsible in driving the mentoring relationship?	
What contributions will each party be committed to bring to the relationship?	
If problems arise how will they be resolved?	
Mentor Signature:	Date :

5. Addressing Difficulties

Discuss it with the line manager

Talk to the line manager about your concerns and agree a plan for moving the relationship forward.

Discuss it with the apprentice

Talk to the apprentice and discuss why you feel the relationship may not be working. In some circumstances, simply by discussing these concerns, the situation can be easily resolved. Also, discuss and agree a way in which you can work better together going forward.

Contact the Apprenticeship Team

If your concerns are still not resolved, agree with your apprentice that you will contact a representative from the Apprenticeship Team at Apprenticeships@uwtsd.ac.uk who may be able to offer additional support and advice.

6. Models to Facilitate and Structure Mentoring Meetings

The following provides a 'journey map' for facilitating a structured mentoring session.

GROW Coaching Model



Using a coaching approach can help the mentee to formulate their goals and objectives. One proven approach is the GROW model. GROW is an acronym standing for:

Goal

Current **R**eality **O**ptions (or Obstacles) **W**ill (or Way Forward)

The model is a simple yet powerful framework for structuring a mentoring or coaching session.

A good way of thinking about the GROW Model is to think about how you'd plan a journey. First, you decide where you are going (the goal), and establish where you currently are (your current reality). You then explore various routes (the options) to your destination. In the final step, establishing the will, you ensure that you're committed to making the journey, and are prepared for the obstacles that you could meet on the way.

The model is designed to help the mentee think things through for themselves and drive towards improved performance

Goal: what is the objective or desired outcome? It must be specific and measurable, think SMART. Ask the mentee, "How will you know when you have achieved that goal?"

Reality: what is the current situation? What is stopping the goal from being reached? Check any assumptions with the mentee, "Why do you think that might happen?"

Options: what choices do they have? What different journeys can they choose to reach the goal? This is also known as 'Obstacles Exploration.' Avoid making suggestions on the mentee's behalf.

Way Forward: what will they do next? This is also known as 'Will' or 'Wrap-Up.' Gain commitment to an action and a follow-up if required

For more information on using the GROW model view:

https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newLDR_89.htm

The Five Cs Model of Mentoring

The model is particularly helpful during a session where the mentor may need to help the mentee to consider alternative ways for dealing with a challenging situation, or for tackling any situation where there may be a number of options and the mentor wants to help the mentee explore these options.

The model has a number of different stages that may be followed sequentially. Nevertheless, it is likely that you will move around the process a number of times, or jump between the stages of the model during a mentoring discussion. It is the role of the mentor to underpin the discussion with an appropriate degree of structure.

Questions are answered at each stage of the process, each one in turn moving the mentee forwards.

1. **Challenges** - what are the challenges facing the mentee?
2. **Choices** - what possible options are available to overcome these challenges?
3. **Consequences** - the consequences of taking each of the choices identified are discussed by the two parties.
4. **Creative Solutions** - this is an opportunity for the mentor to share their wisdom and experience and **offer** the mentee some further solutions.
5. **Conclusions** - the mentee decides what **they** will do next, making a commitment to action

