



# Mentee Guidelines

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## What is Mentoring?

Mentoring is an interactive learning and educational experience, provided to support you with developing your career. It is a relationship between a 'mentee' and a more experienced 'mentor'. Mentoring at Trinity is self-directed. Students search for mentors they would like to connect with. Mentees who participate in mentoring understand that mentors are busy professionals volunteering their time and experience. They understand that the mentor's role is to help by sharing their experience and expertise, and not necessarily to help organise work or offer employment. Below are guidelines to help make mentoring a success for you.

Mentors can offer practical support with preparing for the job search, networking and discussing career options.

Two mentoring options are available:

1. Flash mentoring is for one-off brief careers-related advice, this can be with one or multiple mentors
2. Longer-term mentoring is for a longer relationship with one mentor working towards clear, agreed objectives (at least at the beginning of the relationship) and focused on your career. Part of what makes mentoring valuable is that you keep the same mentor for a period of time – we suggest an initial six-month period. Your mentor can get to know you, your strengths and aspirations. You benefit from better support because they know you, and they get the satisfaction of seeing you progress towards reaching your goals.

## Being an Effective Mentee

The core of a mentoring relationship is conversation, whether by email, phone, video or face-to-face. Many mentors are willing to provide practical help such as reviewing your CV/ LinkedIn profile/ application or interview practice. To be the best mentee you can be we encourage you to follow these guidelines:

### Flash mentoring:

- Be specific, clear and brief in your request so your mentor can respond accordingly
- Activities can include: sending a message, requesting a brief conversation by phone or online on a topic e.g. a mentor's day to day job role, requesting a CV/LinkedIn review
- Thank the mentor for their time

### Longer-term mentoring:

- **Do not assume that all mentors can offer the same types of support** - some mentoring relationships are carried out entirely by Skype/ Zoom
- **Set objectives with your mentor** - choose a few that are Specific Measurable Achievable Relevant Timed (SMART)
- **Review your progress** - each time you meet set aside time to reflect on what you have achieved to date
- **Track your progress** on the document "[Tracking My Mentoring Journey](#)". For students to be eligible to receive the Dean of Students Mentoring Certificate of Completion, you must complete at least three meetings with your mentor (face to face/ video). When completed, co-sign the document with your mentor and you submit it to MyCareer by a specified date in April
- **Ending the mentoring relationship** - either your mentor or you can decide to end the relationship. Please talk to your mentor before ending the relationship
- **Attend the Mentoring Celebration event**

### Generally:

- **Adhere to these mentee guidelines and the mentee agreement**- a requirement to engage in mentoring
- **Take the lead**- you are expected to be proactive in the mentoring relationship and ensure that you are progressing. If you need help with this make an appointment to meet with your Careers Consultant on MyCareer
- **Complete the mentoring feedback survey**

## Commitment Level

We recommend that you engage in one mentoring relationship at a time. Be realistic in your expectations of your mentor and be reasonable about how much time you want from them. What form mentoring support takes depends on what your specific needs are and what the mentor has the time and ability to offer.

Flash mentoring is a series of brief once off interactions with one or more mentors where you commit to keeping your communication succinct.

Longer-term mentoring is a longer commitment. A guideline is to aim for about three meetings of about an hour's duration over a six-month period. In addition, you may engage in e-mails exploring your career questions/concerns. You are in control of how much time you give to mentoring; it is important to communicate your commitment level to your mentor. Students applying for the Dean of Students Mentoring Certificate of Completion demonstrate a high level of commitment.

## How do I get started?

**There are a couple of ways you can find a mentor:**

### Sign up to Trinity's Online Mentoring Platform

- The *Trinity Alumni Online* platform facilitates online mentoring connections between alumni and students/other alumni. The online mentoring platform includes profiles of alumni who are willing to be mentors.
- To connect with alumni for online mentoring, please sign up to the mentoring platform at [Trinity Alumni Online](#).
- Complete your profile.
- Mentors have a limited amount of resources available to them and they may have to decide which of several mentee applicants to choose from first. Give yourself the best chance of selection by having a complete profile including your interests, aspirations and what you are studying. Putting a face to a name always helps, so upload a photo!
- Once you have activated your profile, you will be able to send a message to alumni offering flash mentoring and a mentoring request to alumni of interest to you for longer-term mentoring

### Attend a Face to Face Event Virtually, on Campus or Abroad

- Events are run throughout the year in Trinity and abroad to facilitate face-to-face connections as part of or separate to the Trinity Alumni Online connections. Please go to MyCareer, Events for mentoring events. Visit [www.tcd.ie/alumni](http://www.tcd.ie/alumni) for networking events abroad.

## How do I connect with a mentor?

Connect with a mentor via Trinity Alumni Online. Once you have signed up to the platform and joined flash or longer-term mentoring you can search for a mentor. Once you have found a mentor you would like to connect with, click on their profile, and then click connect. Include a message with your connection request. Template requests can be found below.

Once you have completed this connection step a record of your request will be visible in your messages log. In this log, you can send additional messages to follow up with the mentor if you wish.

### How to structure a mentoring request for flash and longer-term mentoring

- Introduce yourself, what year you are in and what you are studying.
- Tell them about your career ideas and plans. If you do not have any yet, say so.

- Be clear about what you hope to gain from mentoring.
  - “I want to explore your job role/industry so I can understand if I could be happy and successful in it”
  - “I need help with developing [or, selling to employers] the skills I am developing through my degree”
  - “I would like your advice on finding jobs not advertised”
  - “I need help with prioritising my free time to make myself more employable”
  - “I am looking for assistance with networking”

**Don't ask for this as they will probably say no:**

- “I would like a job or internship at your company”
- Say what made you choose them as a flash mentor or a potential longer-term mentor. What appeals to you about their profile?
- Before you send the request:
  - check your spelling and grammar
  - ensure your message is polite and professional. Aim to make your language at least as formal as the mentor's own writing on their profile or how they presented themselves at the mentoring event
  - For students, if you would like further help or advice around this, [book an appointment with your Careers Consultant through MyCareer](#)

**Sample Mentoring Requests:**

Flash mentoring: *“Dear Mary, my name is Olive, I am studying English and interested in working in the publishing industry in Ireland. I would like to know where best to find a job in this sector. I know about publishingireland.ie but need more avenues to explore. Do you have any suggestions? Looking forward to hearing from you. Olive”*

Longer-term mentoring: *“Dear \_\_\_\_\_, My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I am a [insert current educational information or current job position]. I have been looking for some advice on [insert industry, organization name or specific skills] or to hear experiences of someone on this specific professional field. I believe your experiences in [insert organization names, expertise of mentor] will be incredibly valuable to me and will allow me to reach my current goals. I am looking to improve my [understanding of the sector and if it will be a good fit for me, CV, interview skills, commercial awareness in a specific area]. Would you be available to meet for a coffee or have a phone call and explore a potential mentoring collaboration in the upcoming weeks? Looking forward to your reply, [Your name]”*

**What happens next?**

- Once you have sent your request to the mentor a flash mentor will respond briefly to your query, a longer-term mentor will either accept your request, message you looking for more information before deciding or decline your request with an explanation.
- If you do not receive a reply within 7 days, you can send them a reminder message or approach another mentor instead. Please remember that mentors are often busy people and if they have not responded there may be a good reason for this. Please contact Trinity Development and Alumni [alumni@tcd.ie](mailto:alumni@tcd.ie) if you continue to experience difficulty with contacting a mentor.

## Once I have a longer-term mentor. What then?

Has a Trinity alumnus agreed to mentor you for longer-term mentoring? Congratulations! It is now time to start building a relationship with your mentor. [Tracking My Mentoring Journey](#) guides you and your mentor through this process.

### Getting started – checklist

- Say thank you!
- Discuss how and when you will contact each other
- Find out more about each other
- Remind your mentor what you hope to gain from mentoring
- Work together to set some objectives
- Take the lead
- Let them know when you will be away

### Say thank you!

Your mentor is generously giving you their free time, so make sure you thank them before doing anything else. Remember to thank your mentor regularly and to tell them about your successes as well as your problems. Your gratitude and evidence of your progress will encourage your mentor that the time they spend with you is well spent.

### Discuss how and when you will contact each other

- Give your mentor your contact details and ask them how they would prefer to talk to you – this could be by email, phone, Skype or face-to-face. If they prefer phone or Skype, make an appointment for your first conversation.
- Some mentors prefer to stick to email or online messaging, they will speak to you by phone or in person once they have gotten to know you.
- Do ask how often they can be contacted. Be realistic in your expectations. Your mentor is a volunteer, so do not expect too much and show that you are grateful for their time.

### Find out more about each other

- You can take the lead in this by telling them more about yourself. Where are you from? What are your interests? Why did you choose Trinity? What work experience, volunteering and student activities have you done? What are your plans for the future?

### Remind your mentor what you hope to gain from mentoring

- In your mentoring request, you should have told them what you want to achieve from mentoring. However, you should definitely mention this again. This will make sure they remember what you want and also will help to make your first contacts focused and productive.
- Be realistic in your expectations of how much time and support your mentor will give you. Our mentors are volunteers with busy lives – many have demanding jobs, families and other commitments.
- Your mentor's time is valuable, so show them that you value it. Follow through with appointments made; avoid sending too many requests in a short space of time; and try to make progress independently in the times between your conversations.

### Work together to set some objectives

- Mentoring is usually more effective when you start with a clear set of goals. So as a first step, choose a few [SMART](#) objectives with your mentor for what your relationship will achieve. Your mentor and you should work together to write the objectives and make sure that they are SMART.
- You should keep a record of your objectives so you can review them later. Write them down and share them with your mentor. Try to make a simple plan of what you need to do to reach the objectives, and add what you have planned to your calendar or to-do list.

- The “Tracking My Mentoring Journey” document can be helpful to frame your time with your mentor. If you wish to receive a Dean of Students Mentoring Certificate of Completion complete and submit this document with your mentor’s co-signature by the specified date.

### **Take the lead**

- As a mentee, you are expected to lead the mentoring relationship and make sure it keeps progressing. Your mentor is your guide and helper, not your manager. You need to be proactive – request their help when you want it and keep them up to date with your progress.
- Your mentor is busy and does not get paid for their time. They should not have to chase you, nor put in more effort than you.
- If you need help taking the lead or are unclear what you want from your mentoring relationship make an appointment to meet with your Careers Consultant through MyCareer.

### **Let them know when you will be away**

If you know you will not be in contact with your mentor for a while, make sure you tell them first. Otherwise, they may feel you have lost interest in mentoring and might even choose to end the relationship.

## **Managing Expectations**

### **What can I expect from mentoring?**

- Support from an experienced professional in helping you take your next steps.
- Be realistic in your expectations of how much time and support your mentor will give you. Our mentors are volunteers with busy lives – many have demanding jobs, families and other commitments.
- Your mentor’s time is valuable, so show them that you value it. Follow through with appointments made; avoid sending too many requests in a short space of time; and for those engaging in longer-term mentoring try to make progress independently in the times between your conversations.
- Above all, remember to thank your mentor and to tell them about your successes as well as your problems. Your gratitude and evidence of your progress will encourage your mentor that the time they spend with you is well spent.
- The Dean of Students Mentoring Certificate of Completion is available for those students engaged in longer-term mentoring who submit the required documentation by the end of August.

### **What if my mentor can’t meet my objectives?**

- It is not a failure on their part (nor yours) if what your mentor is able to offer does not fit with your needs. In the case of longer-term mentoring, you should honestly discuss this with your mentor and either work together to set different objectives or agree to end the mentoring relationship.
- For longer term mentoring, if the relationship ends early, please try approaching a different mentor. Do not give up just because one mentoring relationship did not work. For best results, approach a new mentor and be open with them about what went wrong last time, so they can judge whether they can meet your needs or whether you should approach someone else.

### **What if my mentor can’t help me with a specific issue?**

Mentors are not expected to be able to deal with every issue that arises.

**For students** - Trinity has a comprehensive professional support network for everything from careers guidance and academic skills to physical and mental health support. The Careers Service can assist with career related issues. Access other supports through [Trinity support services](#) for other issues your mentor cannot assist with.

### **What if I disagree with the advice of my mentor?**

You do not have to agree with everything your mentor says, and you do not have to take their advice.



**For students** - If you want more guidance, need to check something or have an issue that you would prefer not to raise with your mentor, why not book an appointment with [your Careers Consultant through MyCareer?](#)

### **What if I don't get along with my mentor in a longer-term mentoring relationship?**

- Mentoring is like any other kind of interpersonal relationship – sometimes it simply does not work. In that case, it is in the best interests of both you and your mentor for you to end the relationship. Make sure you do this tactfully and thank them for the time they have already given you.
- Once the relationship has ended, you are free to contact a different mentor. Please do not give up just because one mentoring relationship did not work.

## **What is the Dean of Students Mentoring Certificate of Completion?**

It is a certificate issued by the Dean of Students to acknowledge a student's learning through their mentoring journey. Students who engage in longer-term mentoring and complete, sign and submit the [Tracking My Mentoring Journey](#) document to the Careers Service by a specified date in April will receive the Dean of Students Mentoring Certificate of Completion. This document sets out a framework for tracking the mentoring relationship between you and your alumni mentor with the purpose of clarifying your goals, assisting with reflection and optimising learning. As part of this process mentors need to discuss the document with you and co-sign it.



## Tracking My Mentoring Journey 2021/2022

(between student mentee and alumni mentor)

This document sets out a framework for tracking the mentoring relationship between you and your alumni mentor with the purpose of clarifying your goals, assisting with reflection and optimising learning.

The mentoring relationship can start at any point in the academic year but should be completed by **April 2022**. For students to be eligible to receive the Dean of Students Mentoring Certificate of Completion, they must complete at least three meetings with their mentor (face to face / video) and track their progress on the form below. When completed, the mentee and mentor must sign the form and submit it to [MyCareer](#) by **Friday 8<sup>th</sup> April 2022**.

Mentee Name \_\_\_\_\_

Mentor Name \_\_\_\_\_

**Meeting Tracker. Complete as appropriate.**

**Meeting One:**

Date & time \_\_\_\_\_ Location/Online: \_\_\_\_\_

Outcomes of/ actions from meeting:

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**Meeting Two:**

Date & time \_\_\_\_\_ Location/Online: \_\_\_\_\_

Progress since previous meeting:

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Outcomes of/ actions from meeting:

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**Meeting Three:**

Date & time \_\_\_\_\_ Location/Online: \_\_\_\_\_

Progress since previous meeting:

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Outcomes of/ actions from meeting:

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## Mentoring Reflection

Write a reflection on what you gained from your mentoring experience (max 300 words).

Some ideas for your reflection:

- Did this mentoring experience meet your **expectations**? Why?
- Identify the most important **insights** or **knowledge** you gained from this mentoring experience.
- Did you gain any new **skills**? If so, which ones and how will you apply these in future?
- How has this experience influenced your **future career plans**?
- How can you **apply the learnings** to the remainder of your course of study and to your future career and life in general?
- How has mentoring has **benefited you personally and professionally**?

Type here...

### Signatures

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Mentee Signature

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Mentor Signature

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Mentee Email Address

---

Mentor Email Address

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Date

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Date

Upload this completed and signed document to [MyCareer](#) by Friday 8<sup>th</sup> April 2022 to be eligible to receive the Dean of Students Mentoring Certificate of Completion.

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## Mentoring Resources

The mentoring webpage at the [Careers Service](#) website has these guidelines which includes:

- How to Be an Effective Mentee
- How to Find A Mentor
- Tracking My Mentoring Journey

## How can the College support me?

**For students** - For any further advice, read the mentoring resources and/or book an appointment with [your Careers Consultant through MyCareer](#), for all other support see [Trinity Support Services](#).

**For alumni** –You can avail of the Careers Service, see [Policy on Services to Graduates](#) for more information. Please also contact the [Trinity Development and Alumni](#) for further information.

Adapted from original source: Mentoring Guides, Careers & Placements, University of York