

**PhD Peer Mentor Volunteer  
Role Description**

Reporting to: PhD Peer Guidance Network Programme Officer

Starting: March 2026    Ending: December 2026

Time commitment: Approx. 1 hr per week, plus training.

Location: On campus and online

**PhD Peer Guidance Network Mission: Enhance postgraduate wellbeing and foster an inclusive, thriving research community.**

**Role details**

A PhD Peer Mentor is a PhD student who volunteers to provide guidance and support to a group of incoming Yr1 PhD students. As a mentor, you will be one of the first people to welcome the new entrants to College and help them feel included and like they belong.

Alongside other peer mentor volunteers you will be matched with a group of students from your faculty and act as a support for the first phase of their PhD journey, attending and organising discussion sessions and organising social group meet-ups.

**Responsibilities**

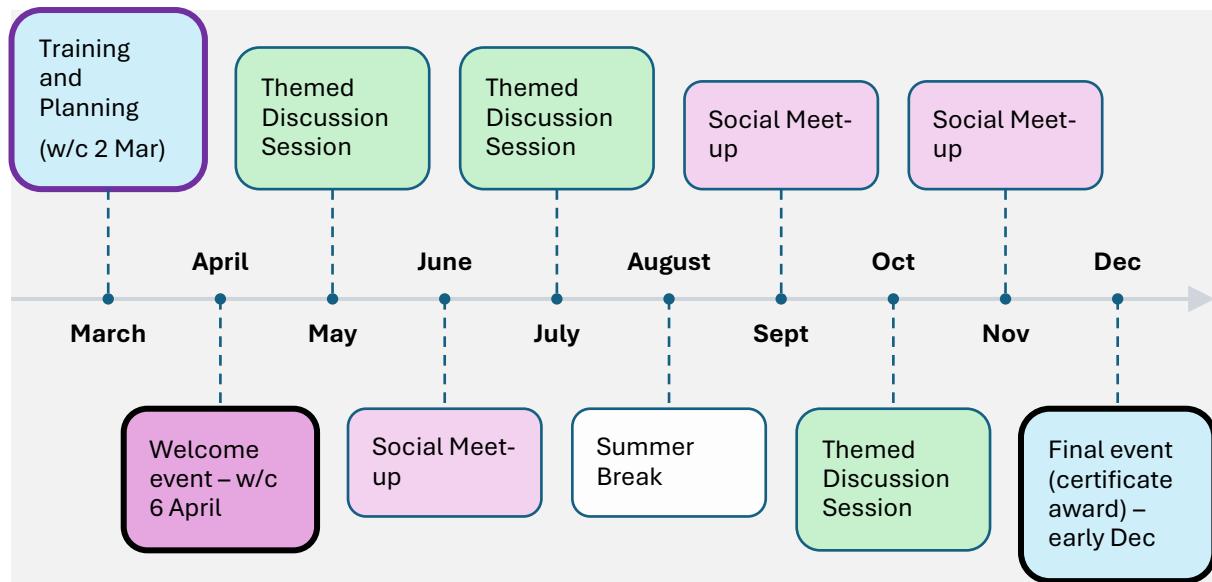
As a guide you play a crucial role in welcoming new PhD students, as well as offering practical advice and social support in their first few months. As a PhD Mentor you will:

- Attend training (4 hours) and planning sessions (1 hour)
- Attend welcome session
- Give a guided campus tour
- Send monthly emails to your group with relevant information (we'll help you with this)
- Answer basic queries over email
- Provide signposting to supports and relevant services for more complex queries
- With your co-mentors, organise three group discussion/information sessions
- With your co-mentors, organise three group social meetups
- Escalate any concerns or queries to the programme support team / PAS directly
- Provide feedback to the programme support team

As a PhD Mentor you will NOT:

- Provide an out of hours support service
- Be a mental health support
- Provide advocacy or representation

## PhD Peer Guidance Network Programme Overview



### Supports

You will be supported by the Programme Officer, the Postgraduate Advisory Service and Student Counselling Service. Training is mandatory and materials will be provided. Regular group debriefing sessions will be held, and staff will be available for queries and emergencies.

### Benefits for volunteer mentors

- Training in leadership, coaching, communication, and group facilitation.
- Key skills for employability in academia and beyond, including training on how to present these to employers.
- Strengthen social network and community.
- Wider mentor network to work with.
- Experience in leadership, teamwork, active listening and development of facilitation skills.
- Support from programme staff.
- A reference, on request (for all mentors who complete the programme).
- Award of certificate of recognition on completing the programme.
- The chance to make a difference.
- Your feedback will be incorporated into the future development of the PhD Peer Guidance Network.

### Benefits to participants

- Feeling welcome and included.
- Support with connecting to fellow students.
- Introduction to research community, help navigating the systems.
- Demystifying the PhD process, with practical advice from someone who has 'been there'.
- Support in setting early academic and personal goals.
- Signposting to support and wellbeing services.
- Increased confidence and knowledge of who to go to when issues arise.

## **Volunteer Attributes**

We are looking for friendly, committed PhD students who enjoy supporting others and contributing to a welcoming research community. You do not need to be an expert — we value personal qualities and lived experience as much as formal skills. Ideally you will have progressed to Year 2 of your own PhD programme.

## **Personal Qualities**

We're looking for mentors who are:

- Approachable, warm and welcoming.
- Good communicators who are comfortable talking with groups and individuals.
- Empathetic and emotionally aware.
- Inclusive, respectful and open to different perspectives.
- Reliable, organised and able to commit to activities and events.

## **Guidance & Support Skills**

Strong mentors are:

- Supportive and encouraging.
- Good listeners who take time to understand others.
- Able to think through challenges and suggest practical solutions.
- Aware of their boundaries and confident about referring students to professional support services when needed.

## **Leadership & Engagement**

You will thrive in this role if you are:

- Comfortable facilitating conversations, tours and group activities.
- Happy working alongside a co-mentor and the wider support team.
- Interested in helping people connect and feel part of the community.
- Proactive and willing to take initiative when organising events or meet-ups.

## **Experience & Background (Desirable, Not Essential)**

We welcome applicants with:

- Knowledge of the campus, services and student life.
- An understanding of common PhD experiences and challenges.
- Previous volunteering experience (in school, college, university or the community).
- Involvement in student societies, academic groups, professional bodies or community organisations.
- Experience working with or within diverse communities.
- Previous work in service industry or roles.

## **Valuing Diversity and Lived Experience**

We welcome applicants from all eligible students, and particularly from students with:

- Cross-cultural experience or international backgrounds.
- Experience supporting or belonging to underrepresented groups.
- Lived experience related to:

- Ethnicity and cultural diversity
- LGBTQ+ communities
- Disability and neurodiversity
- First-generation or widening participation backgrounds

Your perspective and experience are valuable in helping new students feel represented, understood and supported.

### **Essential requirements**

- Complete selection process (recruitment form).
- Complete training (**Tuesday 3 March – 10am-2pm**).
- Attend welcome event (**Tuesday 7 April** – time tbc)
- Availability (approx. 1 hr per week).
- Attend supervision/feedback meetings.
- Take up de-briefs when appropriate.
- Liaise with programme staff.
- Log activity/provide feedback to programme staff.

You are encouraged to discuss your plans to volunteer and the time commitment involved with your principal supervisor.

To apply for the volunteer mentor role please complete the volunteer application form here ([PPGN PhD Mentor Volunteer Application Form – Fill out form](#)).

The closing date for completion of the recruitment form is **Friday 20 February at 12 noon**.

If you would like more information before applying, you are invited to attend the information session on **Wednesday 4 February at 1pm**. Please sign up here ([Volunteer PhD Peer Mentoring Information Session – Fill out form](#)).

For further queries, please contact: [PPGN@tcd.ie](mailto:PPGN@tcd.ie)