



Law Society
of Scotland

Career Development Mentoring Scheme

Mentor Manual

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Foreword

Thank you for your involvement in our Career Mentoring programme.

The Law Society of Scotland is the membership body for Scottish solicitors and the Career Mentoring programme forms part of our outreach and engagement with solicitors and law students. Our scheme provides career development and support to those being mentored as well as you, the mentor, and we hope that the skills you gain during the mentor training and subsequent mentoring can be used to develop your own career.

The legal profession is extremely competitive and challenging and therefore we feel that solicitors and trainees can benefit from the support and guidance a mentor can provide. Having a mentor is also a great self-development tool and solicitors of all stages and levels of experience have been keen to be mentored to develop their own skills and perspectives.

Mission Statement

The Law Society of Scotland is committed to helping students, trainees and solicitors manage their careers, build strong trusting relationships, positive attitudes and develop career skills through mentoring.

Aim and objectives

Our programme's main aims and objectives are:

- Support mentees with goal - setting and career management
- Encourage mentees to take responsibility for their own skills and career development
- Enhance the experience by accessing experienced solicitors' knowledge and expertise
- Provide information about different options and career paths
- Enable mentors to "give back" to the legal profession and be role models for the next generation
- Support mentors to develop their mentoring skills to enhance their own careers

Your Law Society of Scotland Mentor Coordinator

The Law Society of Scotland Career Development Mentoring Scheme is managed by one coordinator:

LSS Career Development Mentoring Scheme

Lyndsey Thomson

The programme coordinator is responsible for the day to day running of the mentoring scheme and their duties include being responsible for the promotion of the mentoring scheme, recruiting mentors and mentees, liaising with participants and organising support events.

Your programme coordinators can be contacted at mentoring@lawscot.org.uk

What is mentoring?

The original 'Mentor' was a wise and trusted counsellor or adviser from Greek Mythology but mentoring is a term now used to describe a developmental relationship between colleagues, one of whom will (normally) be a more experienced practitioner.

Eric Parsloe, The Oxford School of Coaching & Mentoring, describes mentoring as “*to support and encourage people to manage their own learning in order that they may maximise their potential, develop their skills, improve their performance and become the person they want to be*”.

Mentoring relationships facilitate personal and professional development through support, challenge and review. Within the Law Society’s mentoring programme, the role of a mentor involves:

- listening to concerns
- helping to see new perspectives
- identifying barriers and opportunities
- role modelling appropriate behaviour
- challenging assumptions and mind-set
- improving self-awareness
- challenging views and actions
- reviewing current practice
- helping to learn and to develop capabilities
- acting as an independent ‘sounding board’

You should note that the role of a mentor is not to give advice and instruction. You may in the course of the conversation share your experiences, offer suggestions or ideas and give feedback, but it is the responsibility of the mentee to take ownership for the solutions and outcomes of the mentoring conversation.

The LSS Career Mentoring Process

What will you, as a mentor, get out of it?

As a mentor, there are many benefits to be gained from mentoring, these can include:

- The opportunity to share your knowledge and expertise
- Being a role model
- New learning and personal development
- Enhancing your own mentoring, leadership and management skills
- Consideration of your own career development
- Getting a new, fresh perspective
- A way to 'give-back' to the legal profession
- Yearly support and supervision sessions
- Advanced / refresher training opportunities

What will your mentee get out of it?

There are many advantages to having a mentor, these include:

- Help to clarify career goals and ambitions
- Help with career planning and development
- Learning more about themselves and what may be holding them back
- Help to see themselves, their challenges and their opportunities from a new perspective
- Improving their self-confidence
- Receiving impartial guidance and encouragement
- The development of a supportive relationship
- Assistance with problem solving
- Professional development
- Increased network

What you should provide as a mentor:

Being a mentor can be a rewarding and invaluable experience. You will undoubtedly learn new things about yourself that will help you in your own personal development and also in your own career goals. In order to be an effective mentor however, it is important to understand the different elements of the role you have to play:

Advice

You will provide advice, guidance and feedback and share your own experience and expertise as appropriate. You will also be required to act as a sounding board to listen to the mentees' ideas and action plans.

Support

You will be required to provide support when the mentee moves out of their 'comfort zone' and encourage them to take risks, where appropriate. Life doesn't always go to plan and therefore you may also be required to help the mentee understand what has gone wrong and why.

Practicalities

A mentor should be able to identify resources which will help their mentee with personal development and growth. These may include workshops, books, webinars, organisations or new contacts.

The truth

Part of the role of the mentor is to provide truthful feedback which will enable them to move forward. You should also provide assistance to mentees when considering the potential consequences of actions and decisions they make.

Mentor Recruitment and Selection

Mentor applications are accepted all year round. Mentors are not required to have any previous mentoring experience as full training is provided. Applications are stored until a date is confirmed and potential mentees are invited to attend a mandatory training day prior to being allocated a mentee.

When applying, mentors are required to commit to the following:

- Meet the needs of the mentee
- Adhere to the guidelines
- Commit to a programme of approximately 12 months
- Commit to attend mentoring sessions as agreed with the mentee
- Commit to communicate effectively with the mentee and programme coordinator
- Commit to contribute to the monitoring and evaluation process
- Commit to attend training and post training support

Mentor training

We believe that it is very important that our mentors are well trained and prepared for their mentoring assignments. Prior to your mentor profile being approved, all of our mentors are required to attend a one-day mentor training course at the Law Society of Scotland in collaboration with 'Get The Gen'. At any one time we train up to 20 mentors and the day lasts from approx. 9.30am until 4pm.

During the training you will learn:

- The benefits of mentoring
- How to use mentoring to support law careers and develop mentees
- Effective listening techniques for improved understanding
- High quality questioning to increase awareness and create progress
- Understand how adults learn and how to use this insight in mentoring
- How to build strong rapport and relationships
- How to structure effective mentoring and development conversations
- How to provide feedback and share your experience
- The Law Society's Career Mentoring process
- Support available for mentees and mentors

In addition to the initial mandatory mentor training, mentors will also be invited to attend additional training, support and networking sessions throughout the year covers advanced techniques such as the Personal Learning Network (PLN) and how to help your mentee create and use a PLN.

Post training support

Support and supervision is the term used to describe a regular meeting between mentors to discuss their objectives and any issues which may arise relating to the mentoring scheme in a confidential 'safe space'.

The purpose of support and supervision is to support our mentors to ensure that they are able to fulfil their role within the scheme effectively and efficiently. Law Society of Scotland mentors are required to attend one peer support and supervision session each year which comprises of a small group session. This confidential session will provide you the opportunity to take advice on any issues you may encounter during mentoring and to share experiences with other mentors. Support and supervision can be counted as verifiable CPD.

Prior to attending the support and supervision session, mentors will be asked to prepare by answering a number of questions e.g.

- 'What prompted you to sign up for the mentoring programme?'
- 'In what way does it fit in with your expectations?'
- 'What are your hopes for supervision?'
- 'Do you have any concerns about attending supervision?'

The main functions of the LSS support and supervision session is:

- Development – to further develop the skills and capabilities of the individual, provide feedback and to assess any learning and development needs,
- Support – to motivate the mentor, giving them the opportunity to offload or discuss any mentoring-related problems and to monitor the wellbeing of the mentors,
- Communication and Mediation – to establish accountability, consult with and brief mentors about changes to the scheme and facilitate communication between mentors and mentor coordinators

Matching mentor and mentee

Upon completion of the mentor training, the mentor coordinator will approve your online mentor profile at which point you are 'available' to be selected by potential mentees.

Mentors have the opportunity to accept or decline the mentee or to mark themselves as 'unavailable' on the mentoring platform.

The role of the mentee

Once a mentoring request is accepted, it is important that the mentee is well prepared for mentoring. Mentees will be provided with the 'mentee briefing' to manage their expectations in relation to what they should expect and what is expected of them throughout the mentoring relationship. The mentee must read this document prior to meeting with their mentor. A copy of this briefing can be provided upon request.

Before the first meeting the mentee is advised to:

- Consider what they hope to gain from mentoring
- Be clear on what areas they would like to cover in the sessions

To get the most out of their mentoring relationship, mentees are advised that they should

- Ensure they are motivated to develop and grow
- Be open in their communication
- Take ownership and responsibility for the outcomes of the conversations
- Take action as agreed in the sessions
- Reflect on the learning they experience
- Give feedback to the mentor on their experience of the mentoring, the mentor's style and the effectiveness

The mentee is also advised to prepare for each meeting to ensure effective use of time for both parties and are encouraged to ensure that they:

- Are in a 'good place' to concentrate on discussing and exploring your development areas
- Review the agreed objectives for the mentoring
- Review the meeting notes from previous sessions
- Review the progress since the last meeting
- Be at the meeting point in good time

The mentoring relationship

After accepting a mentoring request, **the mentor should contact the mentee** to arrange an initial meeting (this can take place via telephone, email or face-to-face) to prepare the mentee for the mentoring sessions. During this meeting, discussion should take place regarding what their role is in the relationship, what they want to get out of the relationship and how they would like it to work. This meeting should also start to develop the rapport between the mentor and the mentee. **Your first role as a mentor is likely to be to help the mentee clarify their goals and objectives within mentoring.** Make sure you use the techniques learned in your training to help initiate the relationship successfully

During the initial meeting the mentor should:

- Help the mentee understand that the mentoring is for their benefit so that they can communicate their expectations to the mentor
- Ensure they understand the potential of mentoring and are motivated to develop and grow
- Encourage the mentee to think about what they want from the relationship
- Ensure they appreciate how mentoring is different from other development activities
- Ensure they understand what your role as the mentor is **and what it isn't**
- Ensure the mentee understands their own role in the mentoring relationship i.e. openness, ownership and responsibility for the outcomes, taking action and reflecting on the learning they experience
- Explain that you may lead the process initially but that you expect them to take over as the sessions progress
- Encourage the mentee to feedback to you on their experience of the mentoring and that you will not take offence if they prefer a different style of mentoring (remember this is helpful for development of the mentor too!)
- Explain confidentiality and ethical boundaries, and
- Set ground rules e.g. if punctuality is important to you as a mentor, your mentee should be made aware of this

The mentee's goals and objectives are not always clear at the point of application therefore the first role of a mentor is likely to be to help the mentee clarify these.

Don't be discouraged if:

- The mentee spends the first session 'getting it off their chest'
- The mentee is unclear on what they want at this early stage
- The mentee comes up with small, "easy" goals for the first session
- The goals and objectives change significantly when the mentee better understands them self and their challenges

Mentoring meetings

At the initial meeting you will have agreed with the mentee how often, when, and where you will meet and we would recommend committing to a regular arrangement, such as one meeting a month. The meetings should primarily be face-to-face but can be followed by email / video conference / telephone sessions if required or necessary.

- Meeting for an hour once a month is a suitable norm, but you are free to agree a timetable with your mentor and to change it by agreement when that is appropriate
- We recommend that your meeting place be impartial e.g. a quiet corner of a coffee shop / café, or through prior arrangement at the Law Society offices. You will need to consider comfort and confidentiality for both of you
- It is not usually possible or recommended to hold mentoring meetings during normal working hours. Your commitments and those of the mentee will therefore influence timing. Lunch times may be appropriate for most meetings. Others could be just before or after work

Mentoring agreement

We have created a short “Mentoring Relationship Understanding” document. This is intended to be a short outline of what the mentor and mentee are expecting from each other and should be used in the first session to write-up your shared understanding of the relationship.

See the form in appendix A. This form is available in soft copy from mentoring@lawscot.org.uk

The mentoring agreement also contains guidelines on boundaries and confidentiality (code of conduct) and further information can be found later in this manual.

Mentoring reflection

During or after each meeting, mentors are advised to keep a record of reflection on the meeting to analyse the progress of the relationship. The mentor and the mentee should both reflect on the meetings and then discuss respective reflections at their next meeting. Reflections are helpful to track progress and find out how the mentee is finding the process.

There are no specific observations which mentors and mentees are asked to make however you might find it helpful to ask yourself questions such as:

- Did we cover something new today?
- Did we achieve something productive?
- How did my mentee respond to me?
- What did I find difficult today?
- Was the responsibility for the relationship sitting with me or the mentee?

It can be helpful to keep these reflections recorded together in a mentoring diary so that you can track your progress and identify any positive themes or potential issues and completing an informal reflection after each individual meeting will help you prepare for submitting the required formal reviews.

Reflection forms can be requested or can be accessed on the mentoring platform.

Recording, reviewing and reporting feedback

In accordance with our GDPR regulations, mentors and mentees will be contacted via the details provided at application and any changes to these details should be communicated to the other party and the mentoring coordinator as soon as possible. As our mentoring platform is a single sign-on system, you are required to use your LSS member login details therefore please ensure that the mentee is aware if a third party has access to your emails in your absence. **Emails from a work email address should also be sent securely or should be password protected. Information relating to your mentoring sessions must be filed securely using appropriate security measure e.g. password protecting electronic documents or files kept in a locked location to which only the mentor has access. Mentees should not be identifiable in any documentation e.g. use initials or refer to 'the mentee'.**

As a mentor, you will be asked to review the progress of each of your mentoring relationships at six months and when the relationship ends. We would also encourage you to seek feedback from your mentee regularly regarding your style and approach to mentoring. Ask yourself questions such as:

- Is the mentee progressing well towards their objectives?
- Is the mentee able to identify progress as a result of your mentoring?
- Are the practical arrangements working well?
- Do I feel that my mentoring is effective? - What is working well or what isn't?
- Am I enjoying this?

The mentor six-monthly reviews help us to assess how we're supporting our mentors and enables us to keep up to date with the success of the scheme. The review document should be completed and returned to the mentoring coordinator. A copy can be requested from the mentoring coordinator.

Based on your review and any feedback from your mentee, consider whether you need to take some corrective action. Mentors are welcome to contact the coordinator for further support if they have anything they wish to discuss or for further support. Coordinators are not required to be informed about the content of the mentoring sessions.

We may also ask the mentor and mentee if they would be willing and able to provide testimonials that we can use in our marketing materials.

Your mentee will also be asked to review the progress of the mentoring relationship at six months by asking themselves questions such as:

- Am I progressing well towards my objectives?
- Am I able to identify progress as a result of the mentoring support?
- Is the mentoring effective? What is working well? What isn't?
- Are the practical arrangements working well?
- Am I enjoying this?

The mentee should be encouraged to share their feedback with their mentor and should feel secure in doing so.

A final review / reflection of the mentoring relationship will be completed when the sessions come to an end. At this stage, both mentor and mentee will answer questions such as:

- Why did the meetings end?
- Did you feel that your mentoring was effective? (for mentors)
- Did you feel that the mentor's style of mentoring was effective? (for mentees)
- Was the mentee able to identify progress as a result of your mentoring?
- What did I find challenging?
- What worked well and what didn't?
- Did you gain any additional benefits from being a mentor?
- Overall, how satisfied were you with the experience of being a mentor/mentee?

Ending the mentoring relationship

Manage expectations

The mentor will discuss at the initial meeting the expected length of the mentoring relationship. This is likely to depend on the agreed objectives and can be changed by mutual agreement if the circumstances change.

Generally, we would expect the relationship to last no less than one year but could last longer if both parties continue to find it beneficial and productive.

We suggest that, an initial end-date, such as after one year is agreed, with the understanding that if the mentor and mentee both agree, the relationship may continue.

“Job done” ending

If the agreed objectives are achieved within a shorter time than originally planned, celebrate your success and end the relationship on a high. Alternatively, you may agree together to a new set of objectives and continue the mentoring relationship. We would however suggest some caution in the latter case. Ask yourself whether you are continuing just because it is comfortable and convenient? Would you benefit from getting a different perspective from another mentor?

“No-fault” ending

There can be a number of reasons for ending the relationship before the objectives have been achieved:

- Practical changes in circumstances
- Changes in priorities or commitments
- The chemistry is not good
- The relationship is not achieving its objectives.

Either party should always have the option to end the relationship on a “no-fault”, “no-blame” basis. To avoid any awkwardness, we encourage the mentor and mentee to discuss at the beginning how you will end the mentoring relationship e.g. how you will let each other know. It is better to be honest and stop, rather than labour on.

There may also be other alternative sources of support that suit your needs. You are welcome to consult with the mentor coordinator if this is the case (see Additional Support section below)

Confidentiality

To be effective and enjoyable the relationship between mentor and mentee needs to be based on trust and confidentiality. Building trust takes time, but both parties must be comfortable as they share information. Confidentiality parameters should therefore be discussed at the outset of the mentoring relationship.

As a guideline we suggest that the agreement should be that the conversations remain confidential unless it is explicitly agreed between the parties or if the mentor or mentee believes there is convincing evidence of serious danger to the mentor, mentee or others if the information is withheld. This is in line with The [European Mentoring and Coaching Council's Code of Ethics](#).

Mentors will often receive information of a private nature which is not yet public, or which perhaps would not be intended to be public. It is important to note therefore that mentors must always respect and comply with the requirement to keep such information private and all such information will be appropriately marked. Mentors must ensure that confidential information is kept safely, securely disposed of or effectively protected against loss and/or unauthorised disclosure. This requirement remains in force after their mentoring comes to an end.

Mentors must ensure that they are aware of their duties under the Data Protection Act and should also abide by the Society's policies on data handling and security (*see supporting documentation 3*).

Boundaries and Ethics

Limit of competencies

As a mentor it is extremely important that you recognise the limits of your competencies. Unless you are a trained therapist you should ensure that you refrain from trying to use mentoring to help someone who needs alternative assistance. This could include alcohol, drug abuse and mental health issues etc. If a mentee raises issues you are uncomfortable discussing e.g. family disputes, mental health problems etc then we would advise that you are open about your discomfort and discuss with the mentee how best to take the issue forward. It is easy to be drawn into a situation where you want to be able to support however the answer is not to do it yourself but to help the mentee get the help they actually need. This could be through a referral to a more experienced mentor or professional body etc.

Conflicts of interest

As a professional, you need to stay aware of the potential for conflicts of interest of either a commercial or emotional nature and deal with them quickly and effectively to ensure there is no detriment to the person you are mentoring or the organisation they are part of.

Ethical Dilemmas

You may face some ethical dilemmas during your mentoring. The European Mentoring and Coaching Council (EMCC) is the leading professional body for mentoring and coaching in Europe who have established a Code of Ethics for its members which you can use as a guide. The Code of Ethics can be found on EMCC's website www.emccouncil.org

Compliance

As the regulatory body for the legal profession in Scotland, the Career Development Mentoring Scheme requires that its members (mentors and mentees) adhere to the Society's [Code of Conduct](#) in reflection of its key values:

- Integrity – confident, accountable, consistent, responsible and professional decision making.
- Inclusion – maintaining excellent working relationships with our colleagues and the public, supporting the diverse interests of our membership.
- Openness- helpful, accessible, fair, responsive and transparent in the way we work and operate.
- Progress – continuously improving / innovation existing and new services.
- Respect – everyone treated with consideration, dignity and respect.

Equality & Diversity

Mentors and mentees must abide by all equalities legislation and help to deliver the Society's equality and diversity strategy.

Our [equality and diversity strategy](#) provides:

- A statement of commitment by our president
- An introduction to the strategy and what it means for the Society and the profession
- details of the standards and responsibilities we need to meet
- an overview of the organisation
- an overview of the legislation and codes
- information on how we will publish results of work and further information
- our strategic equality and diversity objectives for the period 2014 to 2017
- a report on what we achieved during the period of the last strategy 2011 to 2014
- an action plan for implementing our objectives during 2014 to 2017
- information on our equality impact assessments

Additional Support

Students / graduates / trainees looking for traineeships / NQ positions

The Society's Education, Training and Qualifications team can provide one-to-one support and advice for individuals looking for traineeships or NQ positions. If you would like further information and advice on this, please contact the mentoring team by email mentoring@lawscot.org.uk or call a member of team ETQ on 0131 476 7907.

Individuals returning to employment

If you are returning to work after a period of unemployment and you have questions relating to your practising certificate, or restrictions in what you can do, please contact the Registrar's team at the Law Society of Scotland: registrar@lawscot.org.uk or call 0131 476 7902

Trainees

If there is an issue in relation to a traineeship itself, please contact the Trainee Support Service. The Society provides a dedicated help and support service specifically aimed to meet a trainee's needs.

Trainees can contact the Society directly to discuss any issue they might have with their traineeship on a confidential or anonymous basis. An experienced member of staff will be able to offer guidance, advice and assistance should assistance be required in dealing with issues or difficulties affecting a traineeship.

The Society aims to assist, whether the trainee is seeking formal intervention or simply looking to discuss the issue without formal action being taken. We have helped many trainees who have not wished to identify themselves or their employer, but the Society is unable to intervene directly if not made aware of the name of the individual, firm or organisation.

The Society's Admissions Sub Committee has the power to intervene in training contracts if, after investigation, it is thought necessary.

Katie Wood, Head of Admissions and Secretary to the Admissions Sub Committee, is the Society's contact for any trainee who is looking for help, support or advice on their traineeship. She can also refer individual cases to the committee if appropriate.

For additional information, please contact katiewood@lawscot.org.uk or phone 0131 476 8162.

Professional practice

If you require any assistance with a query related to rules, guidance or any related item please contact the Professional Practice team on 0131 476 7903 who will be happy to take your call.

LawCare

LawCare is an advisory and support service designed to help lawyers, their immediate families and their staff to deal with issues such as stress, depression, addiction, eating disorders and related emotional difficulties.

The service is free and entirely confidential. Although LawCare is funded by professional bodies, it will not, in any circumstances, report back to those bodies about any calls received.

If you are dealing with any of the issues outlined above, please contact LawCare to discuss their problems on 0800 279 6869 or visit www.lawcare.org.uk.

Mentor and Mentee Support

If you are experiencing any issues, challenges or problems relating to the mentoring programme itself please contact Lyndsey Thomson on 0131 476 8143 or email mentoring@lawscot.org.uk.

Appendix A: Example of mentoring agreement

Example



Mentoring Relationship Understanding

This document outlines our shared understanding of the expectations we both have of the mentoring relationship we are entering into.

Duration of the relationship

Our mentoring relationship is expected to last for 12 months from the start date. After the 12 months we may agree to continue the mentoring relationship.

Frequency and place of meetings

We expect to meet once a month at

The first meetings will take place [date/time], [date/time] and [date/time]

Goals and objectives

The goals and objectives of the mentee are:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Confidentiality

Both parties agree that we will not disclose information discussed in our mentoring conversations to any third party unless

- It is explicitly agreed by both parties
- Either of us believe that there is convincing evidence of serious danger to the mentor, mentee or others if the information is withheld

This mentoring programme pilot is run under the auspice of the Law Society of Scotland (LSS). The LSS is not expecting to be informed about the content of the mentoring conversations. In order to evaluate the success and effectiveness of the pilot programme the LSS will be contacting the mentor and mentee on a regular basis to get feedback on how well the mentoring relationship is working. The LSS may also ask the mentor and mentee if they would be willing and able to offer examples of successes and recommendations that the LSS use in the future marketing of the service.

Ending the mentoring relationship

We agree to a no-fault, no-blame conclusion if one or both of us requires the mentoring relationship to end.

Mentor

Mentee

Date