



UK Council
for International
Student Affairs

Mentoring schemes for international students: a practical guide

UKCISA

THE PRIME
MINISTER'S INITIATIVE
FOR INTERNATIONAL
EDUCATION

UKCISA is the UK's national advisory body serving the interests of international students and those who work with them.

It does so through research, print and web-based publications, a national training programme, dedicated advice lines for students and advisors, and liaison and advocacy with institutions, agencies and government.

Its members include all UK universities, those further and higher education colleges which are active internationally, and a range of specialist and representative bodies.

This guide, compiled and written by Celia Partridge, is one of a number of guides produced with financial support from the Prime Minister's Initiative for International Education (PMI) with the aim of helping UK institutions strengthen still further the quality of the experience for international students coming to the UK.

UKCISA is extremely grateful to all those who have contributed case studies and other information.

ISSBN xxx

© UKCISA 2008

**UK Council
for International
Student Affairs**

Mentoring schemes for international students: a practical guide

UKCISA

THE PRIME
MINISTER'S INITIATIVE
FOR INTERNATIONAL
EDUCATION

Contents

Acknowledgements	4
Chapter 1 Introduction	5
Aim and scope of the guide	5
Defining mentoring	5
Why mentoring?	6
Chapter 2 Starting up	8
Where to begin	8
What might work best in your institution	9
Existing provision	10
Aims and objectives	10
Start with a pilot	11
Have a long-term view	11
Work out your resources	12
Write a work plan	12
Keep others informed	14
Chapter 3 Resources	15
Budget	15
Sources of funding	16
Staffing	17
Sustainability	17
Chapter 4 Recruiting and training mentors	19
Incentives	19
Who to recruit	20
When to recruit	21
Recruitment methods	21
Training mentors	22
Contracts	23
Chapter 5 Getting it underway and managing relationships	25
Letting mentees know of the scheme	25
The matching process	25
Expectations	27
First meetings	27
Dealing with difficulties	28
Closure in the mentor/mentee relationship	29

Chapter 6	Evaluation and feedback	30
	Monitoring progress	30
	Evaluating the finished scheme	30
Chapter 7	What next?	32
	Consider the future	32
	Publicise success	32
	Reporting and bidding for future funding	32
Appendix A	Further information and resources	34
Appendix B	Examples of mentor and mentee contracts	35
Appendix C	Examples of mentor application forms	41
Appendix D	Examples of mentee application forms	45
Appendix E	Examples of mentor training programmes	51
Appendix F	Example of advice on safety and confidentiality	54
Appendix G	Example of generic mentor email	56
Appendix H	Examples of mentoring monitoring methods	57
Appendix J	Example of mentor evaluation form	60
Appendix K	Example of mentee feedback form	62
Appendix L	UKCISA survey on mentoring provision	65

Acknowledgements

This guide was prepared using the results and information provided from the UKCISA survey on mentoring provision (see Appendix L) – for which thanks to those who completed it – and through many conversations with staff in institutions and organisations that are involved in mentoring.

We would like to thank the following people for their professional advice during the production of this guide, and those who have given permission for us to reproduce internal documents:

Mike Bartle, Team Leader Student Services, Dundee College
Matthew Bates, Student Mentoring & Coaching Officer, University of Wolverhampton
Siska Benoit, International Student Advisor, Northumbria University
Rachel Colclough, Information and Advice Worker (Overseas), Blackburn College
Marianthi Dalkidou, International Office, University of Portsmouth
Dr Iona Huang, Director of International Student Centre, Staffordshire University
Rong Huang, International Student Tutor, University of Plymouth
Charlotte Leather, Post-16 Peer Mentoring Coordinator, Mentoring & Befriending Foundation
John Morris, International Student Support Officer, Keele University
Ian Munton, Student Development and Support Coordinator, University of Sheffield
Maria O’Riordan, International Welfare Adviser, Chichester University
Nicola Peacock, International Student Support Manager, University of Bath
Olivia Reid, Coordinator, International Student Support Services, La Trobe University, Australia
Sally Saca, International Student Adviser, University of Bath
Ruth Sharpe, Mentoring Coordinator, University of Central Lancashire
Fay Sherrington, Student Support Coordinator, University of Salford
Sandra Siddiquey, Manager, International Office, Thames Valley University

Chapter 1 – Introduction

Aim and scope of the guide

This guide aims to provide practical support to staff in higher education (HE) and further education (FE) institutions who are considering setting up mentoring schemes specifically for international students. It will cover all the major points to consider in setting up such a scheme and provide sample documents as an aid to those setting up new schemes.

This guide is not intended to be a comprehensive exploration of all the different schemes being introduced, but rather it aims to help institutions where schemes are in their infancy or struggling to be sustainable, by providing a variety of suggestions on dealing with the issues involved.

The focus of the guide will be on setting up centralised schemes that are cross-departmental, although much of the information will be relevant for more specialised departmental schemes. Many institutions are continually innovating in this area, and a selection of detailed case studies on these and on all aspects of international students services is available at <www.ukcisa.org.uk/pmi>.

Defining mentoring

For consistency and ease of reference, this guide will use the term “mentoring” to describe the process of existing students providing support to new international students. It focuses mostly on the process of one mentor supporting either a single mentee or a small number of mentees during the settling-in period (and in some cases the ‘pre-arrival’ period). The term ‘mentee’ will be used to describe those international students who receive support from the mentors.

The term mentoring can often be misunderstood by international students, so you may wish to consider other titles for any scheme that you set up (see Chapter 5). It may be helpful to ask students what they understand by the term mentoring and to do some research into what might be a more easily understood or meaningful term.

Institutions use a variety of other terms to cover the process of assisting international students to settle in and to encourage greater cooperation and understanding between home and international students. These may include buddying, peer pairing, conversation clubs, peer mentoring or friendship networks, amongst others.

Each of these terms may have a different implication depending on the aims of the scheme and those who run it. It could be seen that each of these terms implies a certain level of formality to the organisation or expected outcome of the scheme. For example, mentoring or peer mentoring is often seen as a more formalised scheme than, say, a buddying scheme, even though in practice many of the organisational aspects may be similar.

Resources may well dictate the perceived level of formality and so friendship networks and conversation clubs could imply a reduced level of administration and a more relaxed attitude to achieving particular outcomes; just the option of offering a scheme (if even if very informal in operation) may provide exactly the sort of concern and care that a new international student may be looking for. Others make a different distinction between mentors and buddies, for example that mentors provide one-on-one support to mentees, whereas buddies may work in groups with those they are helping.

Some institutions run mentoring schemes in order to target international students in particular ‘at-risk’ groups, such as those students more at risk of being isolated or those admitted with a lower than expected level of English ability.

You should think carefully about the type of scheme you want to run and what you call it. This will affect how you advertise and run it (see Chapter 2), as well as influence who else becomes involved. For example, conversation clubs will more likely include the involvement of the language centre or language tutors, whereas schemes aimed at particular ‘at-risk’ groups may well include the involvement of counsellors or community groups.

Why mentoring?

Mentoring is generally accepted to be a powerful tool for helping people through difficult situations and periods of transition. Support of any kind at a turning-point in life speeds up the process of transition and allows the recipients to adjust more quickly. In a student context, the process of beginning study in a new country – as well as coping with a new cultural environment – can take some getting used to.

Most institutions already run comprehensive orientation or induction weeks, or sessions, organised either centrally or through the students’ union. These provide a wealth of reassuring support as well as signposting services that students will be able to make use of during their period of study.

However, mentoring schemes go beyond this initial support and give a more personal approach and longer-lasting support to those who are most in need of it. Mentoring is increasingly being used in the education sector to help new students adjust to

and feel fully a part of their new student community on campus (socially as well as academically), and their local community as well as their individual departments or faculties.

International students face particular challenges in adapting to studying in the UK, which include:

- difficulty understanding and being understood in English (including use of slang as well as formal academic English)
- a need to adjust to UK culture and customs
- lack of cultural reference points
- being required to adapt to a new style of learning very quickly (especially for Masters students on one-year programmes)
- being unfamiliar with many practicalities that UK students instinctively understand (eg, setting up a bank account, registering with a GP)

A survey undertaken by UKCISA in 2008 (see Appendix L) found that out of 154 institutions, only 29% ran mentoring schemes specifically for international students. Many of the remaining 71% are likely to run some form of non-international student-specific mentoring scheme. This guide recognises and addresses the particular needs that international students new to the UK have, which may not necessarily be met by catch-all schemes. These issues will therefore affect the training needs of the mentors themselves (whether home or international). For example, mentors may benefit from cross-cultural awareness training and advice on communicating with those whose first language is not English (see Chapter 4).

Having a scheme which focuses on the international dimension in relationships between new and more experienced students also encourages internationalisation within the institution, as it encourages students to explore these areas of difference, and in some ways, to pre-empt and help to explain any difficulties which may come later on in the students' course of study, such as group work.

Chapter 2 – Starting up

Where to begin

Before starting any new scheme, it is important to consider why it would be of benefit as well as any possible reasons for failure. Mentoring schemes aimed at students may include any or all of the following benefits:

For international students, mentoring can:

- make students feel wanted/valued by the institution and local community before and after their arrival
- help them adjust to their local environment and settle in more quickly
- encourage integration or engagement with UK students, with the institution and with their local community
- educate them in UK (and other) cultures and traditions
- allow them a different outlet for their questions, especially if they find it embarrassing or awkward to ask institution staff
- improve their level of English comprehension
- encourage friendships

For student mentors, mentoring can:

- increase confidence in both mentor and mentee abilities
- encourage understanding of other cultures and therefore reduce any tensions on campus
- be an effective method of personal development
- be a positive non-academic addition to a CV (especially if credit is attached to mentoring)

For institution staff and the institution itself, mentoring can:

- lead to fewer pre-arrival enquiries for staff to deal with
- highlight any difficulties before students arrive, which helps with forward planning for staff
- provide good publicity locally as well as a good marketing opportunity for future recruitment
- demonstrate the institution's commitment to internationalisation
- promote good campus relations

Mentoring schemes can include the involvement of staff and students across the institution, so any scheme must be well planned in order to be successful. Common reasons for the failure of schemes to get off the ground include:

- lack of planning and organisation
- lack of resources (either of staff or budget)
- being too ambitious
- finding it too labour intensive
- numbers of international students may be too low to justify the effort or expense
- finding it difficult to recruit and retain student mentors

Additionally, it may be possible that your institution does not need a mentoring scheme; other similar programmes may already work well and provide similar benefits. So, before you do anything, make sure you consider the following:

What might work best in your institution

This could be limited by the likely number of mentors or mentees, or by the pressures of staff time and other resources. However, options might include:

- a pre-arrival online mentoring service of some kind, such as setting up a Facebook or other online social network where current students answer questions from new international students before they arrive
- pairing up (or grouping up) international students with more experienced home (or other international) students on arrival in order to help provide help and assistance, and basing this around social activities
- encouraging and helping departments to set up their own schemes
- focusing on one group of students, such as those with dependants (see Case Study below)
- setting up a conversation exchange where international students are paired with UK (or other current international) students in order to help each other develop language skills
- setting up a mentoring scheme that helps new international students to learn about the differences in UK academic culture and study skills
- focusing on mentoring international students with regard to work experience and the UK working environment

Case study

The Family Ambassador Scheme was set up at the University of Nottingham in order to link current students and their families with prospective students to answer questions about what it is like to live in the UK as an international student with a partner and/or children. The initiative was trialled with students from Egypt. An initial meeting with current students established the level of interest in taking part in the scheme. Prospective students were notified by email. Prospective students who expressed an interest in the scheme were matched with current students by email. The project was run by one member of staff for approximately two hours a week at key times in the recruitment cycle. The project helped international students with families to settle in the UK more quickly.

Existing provision

Make sure you are aware of the existing mentoring schemes in your institution. If one particular department already runs a scheme, go and speak to the person who organises it and find out whether duties can be shared or used as a model for other departments, or ask for advice and guidance on how to go about it. There is no point in spending a long time in setting up a scheme only to find that you are duplicating something that already exists. If your institution does not yet provide any mentoring schemes, you may then decide to set up a central scheme, or facilitate the development of schemes in individual departments, or even within other student environments, such as accommodation.

Aims and objectives

It is important that you are clear on what you are aiming to achieve by setting up a mentoring scheme. Is it the integration of home and international students? Or maybe you'd like the mentoring scheme to focus on language or academic support for international students? Consider the list of alternative schemes above and focus on how important it is for your scheme that the mentors get something out of it too. Bear in mind that the more obviously one-sided the mentor/mentee relationship is, the more difficult it will be to recruit mentors, as there will be fewer obvious benefits to them. This is where you will have to carefully consider paying or otherwise rewarding mentors for their involvement.

The most informally run and least resourced schemes may well have the more modest aims of providing international students with a contact in their institution who knows the ropes and is a non-staff member of the institution to whom they can turn for help and advice during their settling-in period. A mentoring scheme, perhaps based solely on the aim of improving English language capability (perhaps more accurately described

or advertised as a conversation club or exchange) may also be run relatively informally yet with clear goals.

An alternative way of looking at mentoring programmes is to consider the mentor-mentee relationship as a mutually beneficial one, where mentees are not necessarily seen as people with problems to be resolved but rather as people with skills and abilities to be offered, from which UK students can learn. Viewing the mentoring experience in this way will affect the way it is advertised (especially within the institution itself) and more thought will need to be given to managing expectations (see Chapter 5) as well as the mentoring training process (see Chapter 4).

If aims and objectives are not decided in advance, then the project can end up being unfocused and disorganised. All those involved need to know why the scheme is taking place so that they know what they are working towards. Having clear aims, which are well communicated at the start, will help in managing the expectations of both the mentors and mentees involved in the scheme.

Start with a pilot

If no resources are specifically set aside for international student mentoring, start small. Decide on a group of international students that you would like to focus on. This might be a particular nationality (or group of nationalities), a particular subject group, or group of scholarship students. Or it might focus particularly on mature students or those whose first language is not English. This will keep the organisation manageable and well directed in the first year and will make any problems that arise easier to address. A successful scheme can then be more effectively expanded and advertised, especially to senior managers who hold the purse strings (see Chapter 7).

Have a long-term view

Consider the start of this scheme as the beginning of a two- or three-year project, at least. It is unlikely that you will chance upon the perfect scheme in its first year of operation. You will come up against challenges and difficulties, and accepting that the scheme will continue for at least two or three years will allow you to deal more easily with these issues and to use what you learn for the future. It gives you a chance to correct any mistakes and develop good ideas. Persisting for a longer period will also give you a ready-made group of students who have been through the scheme and whose advice and support you can make use of.

You should also consider how you would envisage your pilot developing in year two of the scheme and how it might be extended. If your aim is to secure funding for future

years of the scheme, make sure that you set measurable (and realistic) objectives and that you think about how much impact a larger scheme in subsequent years would have on resourcing.

Work out your resources

You may be one of the lucky ones who has a pot of money ready to spend on setting up a scheme. If so, work out a budget and consider all the likely costs. If not, think creatively about your resources. Does anyone's job description encourage involvement in setting up such a scheme, such as volunteering coordinators or international office staff involved in orientation? Would anyone like to become involved? To what extent can you involve current students in helping to run the scheme? This might include, for example, students on courses with volunteering credits or modules involved, or you might approach the students' union to request their support. Resources will be covered in more detail in Chapter 3, but make sure that you consider this at the outset. Although the international office might be instrumental in setting up the scheme, think about which other departments might have a vested interest in a successful mentoring scheme. As mentioned, the range of people involved will be dependent on the type of scheme you are planning and will affect who you will approach for their help and expertise.

Write a work plan

Write a list of all the tasks that are involved in setting up the scheme and who will complete them. List the main ones in your work plan. When will you advertise for mentors and for how long? How and when will you let international students know about the scheme? What about training the mentors? And how long will the scheme itself last – just for two weeks after orientation or for a longer period? When and how will you collect feedback? Does your work plan follow a realistic timescale? Take into account holiday periods and workload of any staff involved with the scheme.

If you're going to be bidding for future funding, or your continued funding is based on the outcomes of your scheme, don't forget to include the time that must be spent writing a report on the scheme once it's finished. And think about what might go wrong and what you would do if it did. Are some times of the year going to be harder to recruit students, for example? And if it helps, set yourself a realistic goal or target. How many new international students would like to have a mentor? Or how many mentors would you ideally like to recruit? Setting goals can make it easier to keep focused and assess your progress. All these areas will be covered in greater detail later in this guide in order to help you work out how to put your work plan into action.

Example work plan

Action	Date	Who?
Engage those interested in potential scheme	January/February	Scheme co-ordinator
First meeting to discuss planning: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • target groups • publicity • recruitment • funding • evaluation 	February	Scheme co-ordinator, departmental representatives, international office staff, student services representative, student helper
Decide target group – students on business course?	End February	Co-ordinating group
Recruit mentors	March	Scheme co-ordinator, with assistance from department reps and others from coordinating group
Train mentors	End March/April	Scheme co-ordinator & student services rep
Advertise scheme to potential mentees	July – September	Scheme co-ordinator
Update co-ordinating group with latest information	July	Scheme co-ordinator
Complete matching process	August/September	Scheme co-ordinator with assistance from student helper
Put mentors and mentees in contact with each other	August/September	Student helper
First meet-up event	Induction Week	All co-ordinating group
Monitor scheme – email feedback and mentor focus groups	October-December	Scheme co-ordinator
Hold closing event – get positive quotes!	December	Co-ordinating group

Action	Date	Who?
Evaluate scheme – questionnaire	December	Scheme co-ordinator with assistance from student helper
Review scheme, write report, publicise success, incorporate changes and plan for next year – consider using good mentors as mentoring helpers/ambassadors	January/February	Revised co-ordinating group

Keep others informed

A mentoring scheme cannot work in isolation from the rest of the institution's activities. Make sure that other departments as well as academics know that you're organising the scheme and that senior managers are aware that a pilot will be in operation. Try to identify particular people who will support the scheme and champion it around the institution. This might include tutors, department support staff, international student advisers or students' union sabbaticals. Spend some time meeting these people and explain why you are setting up the scheme and what benefits it could have for them directly (see chapter 2). Keep these people regularly updated with developments in order to keep them engaged. If you are the only person who knows that the scheme is taking place, it will be much harder to advertise and to get people enthused. Publicise the scheme around your institution as well, with posters and flyers. And don't just mention it once – keep reminding people of what you're working on and what benefits it could bring to the institution and to their involvement with their students.

Chapter 3 – Resources

Two of the most common reasons for not setting up mentoring schemes or for schemes failing are a lack of staff time to run any scheme and no budget. So, alongside planning your scheme based on your specific aims and objectives, and after you have considered the particular nature of any pilot scheme, you need to carefully consider what resources you have at your disposal. A number of institutions do run mentoring schemes without any specific budget, and again, organisation and planning are critical.

Budget

Mentoring schemes can be (and are) run successfully without any committed budget, although even a small sum can go a long way. Begin by listing what you might need to pay for. This might include any or all of the following:

- publicity for the scheme
- payment for mentors' work
- any extra staff costs involved
- venue costs and catering for any mentoring events
- staff and mentor trainers' time
- design and printing of any mentor training programme
- certificates/prizes for mentors

Again, not all schemes pay mentors or have lengthy training programmes or need to pay for the hire of a venue, so you may be able to avoid many of these costs. Some schemes put aside a small sum of money for the mentors to use at their own discretion in order to run events themselves or activities with their mentees or groups of mentees.

Case studies

Institution A runs a mentoring programme that involves a total of around 50 mentors and a similar number of mentees. A student coordinator is employed over a period of about six months to deal with the administration, including entering mentor and mentee details on a database and going through the matching process. Mentors are given a £10 book voucher if they become involved in the programme. An opening event is held for all mentors and mentees to meet and a closing buffet signals the end of the programme. For this programme their budget is as follows:

Student Co-ordinator (£6.50/hr, max. 5 hrs/week for 6 months) = £780
 Book vouchers (£10 each for 50 mentors) = £500
 Opening & closing events with catering included = £1000
 Total = £2,280

Additionally, one member of staff in the International Office oversees the student coordinator and runs half a day of training for the mentors.

Institution B runs a mentoring scheme that involves around 30 mentors and around 100 mentees. The scheme is very informal and mentors are given half a day's training but are not paid. The scheme begins with an informal meet-up event and ends with a sit-down Christmas meal, which accounts for the majority of the costs:

Training activity materials including refreshments = £50
 Launch event refreshments = £75
 Christmas event = £700
 Total = £825

Sources of funding

If you feel that you cannot run a mentoring scheme without a specific budget, consider putting forward a business plan to your line manager or other senior managers. This should be a complete proposal for what your planned scheme is, its aims and objectives, an explanation of why it is needed and your targets, plus an indicative, though realistic, budget. You could equally consider pooling resources with academic departments, or with other sections of student support, such as the counselling service, welfare, or the accommodation office. Focusing your pilot scheme on a particular group of students may also help to focus the search for funding. For example, if your pilot scheme were organised around a particular set of scholarship students, you could approach their funder(s) for some sponsorship of the scheme.

If your scheme's aim is to foster a greater degree of integration between home and international students, or between international students and the local community, you could approach local voluntary or other organisations for support. And keep a list of all those you approach. You can always go back to them next year for support once you have a successful scheme in operation. If you do secure funding, remember to report back to them to keep them involved in the scheme's development.

Staffing

Once you have decided the size and scale of your project, consider what level and nature of staffing is required. For example, you may just need someone to receive applications for mentors and mentees and then spend time matching them up. Or you could employ a student to spend half a day doing this work. You may also need to produce some publicity for the scheme – is there anyone in your department or international office who could do this, or again, could you get students involved?

Alternatively, you may want to employ a couple of committed students to run the scheme or just to spend two or three hours a week for a few weeks in order to get it up and running. If you decide to employ students (on either a paid or voluntary basis), do be clear what you expect of them so that you can easily assess whether their time has been spent productively.

Case study

Institution C runs a successful mentoring programme with no assigned budget. The programme does have the support of a Pro Vice-Chancellor and a senior manager and a small amount of money was initially provided in order to run an event to support the programme. One member of staff is responsible for recruiting mentors and completing the matching process. Details are entered on to an Excel spreadsheet and matches are made in a very ad hoc way with three mentees to each mentor; the only criterion being that within each group, mentors and mentees must not be of the same nationality. Mentors are given half a day of training and are unpaid. Feedback has been positive and a bid for future funding to extend the scheme will be based on these positive comments, and the benefits achieved for the students for a relatively small amount of expenditure.

Sustainability

If you want to plan for a scheme that lasts beyond one year, you should also bear in mind future running costs. Setting up the scheme is bound to be work intensive as you will need to have materials designed, and processes and procedures put in place, and unexpected difficulties may occur.

Many of these original set-up costs, including the time spent designing and producing materials may of course be reduced in future years, but think about which costs might increase if numbers were to increase. How many more students could the current set-up cater for, and at what point would more staff time be necessary in order to run an effective scheme? Consider whether more resources would be available for a larger scheme and what economies of scale might exist.

Chapter 4 – Recruiting and training mentors

The recruitment of a ready supply of mentors is crucial to the success of any mentoring scheme. However, this can often be one of the biggest challenges in setting up such a scheme. Potential student mentors may not, with all the other demands on their time, have sufficient interest in or recognition of the benefits of being involved in mentoring international students. Their course may take up too much time, they may just be apathetic about becoming involved or may just not want to give up their valuable socialising time. Providing incentives and communicating the worth of mentoring schemes is therefore key to attracting mentors.

Incentives

Most institutions that run mentoring schemes offer some form of incentive to would-be mentors. Offering an incentive makes the scheme look a more attractive (and possibly a more professionally run) proposition to potential mentors and also allows you to tie in the incentive with a particular level of commitment expected from the mentor. This has the effect of formalising the arrangement between you and the mentors and provides a greater level of expectation of service from them. You could, for example, require the mentors to provide a certain number of hours of service, such as at least two hours per week for five weeks, or to be a mentor for a whole term (see Appendix B). Incentives could include some of the following:

- payment (hourly rate or a lump sum once the mentoring has come to an end, to cover expenses)
- vouchers or tokens (eg book or record tokens, cinema vouchers)
- discounts (eg money off local services, free membership of local services, money off other institutional services)
- training or involvement in the mentoring scheme being accredited in some way (such as national accreditation as a volunteer)
- certificate of achievement or completion of the scheme
- eligibility for a prize or award

Note on accreditation

Mentoring (including the training process) can be accredited in various ways, including informal internal institutional accreditation or more formalised external or national schemes. Details of some of these are given in *International students and volunteering: a practical guide* (UKCISA, 2008)

It can be argued that paying the mentors to be involved defeats the purpose of the scheme (and makes it more expensive to run). Some institutions deliberately avoid payment for mentors and instead stress the transferable skills that students will pick up by being involved in such a scheme, such as cultural awareness, listening, problem-solving and even language skills. Being a mentor is something that is closely linked to one's personal development and employability skills and is something that can be added to a CV. Some institutions provide academic credit to those students choosing to become mentors. This can be through a volunteering module or other similar credit-bearing courses.

Case study

Institution D runs a mentoring programme without any budget. The only costs, apart from staff time, are around £70 for an initial event that kick-starts the programme. Around 50 students are involved as unpaid mentors – the matching process takes two staff one day to arrange, based mostly on the students' course of study, as well as age and gender. Information is entered on an Excel spreadsheet and filters applied in order to sort for the best matches. This programme is run in an informal way – at the initial event, mentees who have signed up can bring other friends who have not yet signed up and these people are incorporated into the programme. Mentors are provided with a certificate of participation and feedback from both mentors and mentees indicates that the institution is seen as caring of its new students.

Who to recruit

Particular types of student may also be easier to recruit as mentors than others. For example, language or exchange students returning from their year abroad are more likely to see the worth of mentoring other students, especially as they will understand the emotions and practical difficulties involved in moving abroad to study. Other students on courses with a particularly international outlook as well as international students themselves could also be encouraged to participate, especially by their tutors. Or you may consider advertising the course to those studying subjects closely allied to people and behaviour, such as psychology. So targeted recruitment may prove more effective than a simple email to all students.

You should also decide on the limits of your recruiting pool, that is whether you wish to recruit only the most experienced students, eg third years or postgraduates, or whether all students, including exchange or short-term students, would also be eligible to apply to be mentors.

Your selection process should also include some way of checking the suitability of mentors for the role. A carefully worded mentor application form is likely to weed out those students whose motivation for becoming involved may not be what you are looking for. Choosing criteria in advance for the kinds of mentors you are looking for will help you to be consistent in your selection process and be transparent to those who you do not select in the end.

When to recruit

The recruitment process may take several weeks, so it is important to choose your recruitment period wisely. Trying to recruit during exam times is not likely to attract the maximum number of potential mentors and likewise holiday times. As a result many institutions seem to choose April as a good recruiting time (for mentoring programmes that begin in September or October), or else towards the end of the summer term.

Recruitment methods

This can be as formal or as informal as you like, depending on numbers and the aims of your scheme.

Common recruitment methods include:

- emailing all students
- emailing particular groups of students
- getting academic support and going along to speak to particular groups of students
- asking academics or tutors to speak directly to their students
- contacting your institution's volunteering centre to ask for volunteer mentors
- recruiting a few 'student mentoring ambassadors' to act as recruiters for others
- approaching student union representatives to help with the recruitment process
- distributing flyers
- putting up posters

The level of information and commitment you require from would-be mentors may vary at this stage. You may just decide to ask would-be mentors to reply to your email, or to join a Facebook group of potential mentors, or simply to return a paper or online application form (see Appendix C). Those who respond could then be asked to attend a meeting for further information. The meeting could be used to distribute application forms and go through the planned scheme in more detail. All institutions are different; the important thing is to choose what you feel will work best.

Remember, though, that a few months may elapse between mentors' recruitment and their actual mentoring. So keep them involved during this period. As well as their training, send them regular updates, or links to useful websites (eg, focusing on developing their listening skills, or specific information about the benefits of mentoring schemes, stories of successful mentoring partnerships, etc). This will help to keep them inspired and enthused about what they are involved in.

Despite your best efforts, it is likely that some mentors may decide not to continue with the scheme (see next section). Make sure that you allow for some students to drop out and that you keep tabs on the reasons for the drop-outs, as you may be able to respond to this and reduce the drop-out rate in the future.

Training mentors

All mentors should, if possible, receive some level of training in how to act as an effective mentor. This is crucial in order to, at the very least, establish the mentors' expectations of the scheme, and to let mentors know what you expect them to do. Gathering all the mentors together for a period of training will also encourage them to feel part of something that has a purpose. Training may last from a one-hour overview to a one- or two-day training programme (possibly allied to a volunteering module towards which credit is given).

Training may include some or all of the following areas:

- expectations (of the scheme itself, of the range of support likely to be required, of the outcomes, of potential friendships or relationships)
- confidentiality
- data protection
- cultural awareness (including communicating with those whose first language is not English, attitudes and expectations of socialising and alcohol, differing attitudes to time and to communication)
- boundaries (the limits of the mentor/mentee relationship, what is and is not acceptable within this relationship, how to respond to the mentee overstepping these boundaries)
- dealing with difficulties (how to help if you do not know the answer, not being able to relate well to mentees, problems within the mentor/mentee relationship)
- a mentor's role (answering general queries, signposting university or college services, encouragement and support, tours of campus or the local environment, helping mentees to cope with new and unfamiliar methods of learning, approaching professors, choosing modules etc, involving them in social activities, explaining about the concept of the student union and its activities, etc)
- endings (how and when to draw the mentor/mentee relationship to a close)

Case study

Institution E runs a mentoring programme, which attracts around 500 students as mentors and mentees and is run on a very small budget. Mentors are unpaid but are provided with a training session that lasts around three and a half hours. A follow-up session to this training also takes place where ex-mentors provide further training and support. The administration – including training, matching (based on course of study) and ongoing support – is handled by three staff within the Student Support Team, with the busy times for the scheme being during the recruitment and training process (February-April) and the start of the programme (August-September).

Mentors may report that their mentee was not someone they could relate to or that they did not help their mentee in the way they expected, that their mentee's needs were different from what they were expecting. Any training programme should ensure that mentors are aware of the very different types of mentee needs – from simple practical things to more in-depth personal difficulties.

Any mentors likely to mentor students under the age of 18 would need to be CRB-checked, or at least a requirement should be in place that they should meet their mentors in a public place or in the company of larger groups at all times. In these cases, you should refer to your own institution's policies on the under 18s. Further information on these issues can be obtained from *International students under 18: guidance and good practice* (UKCISA, 2008).

Remember to make clear exactly what their responsibilities are:

- who is responsible for the initial contact and first meeting?
- Is there a minimum number of hours a week/a month that mentors should contact their mentees (and over what period of time)?
- do they have to physically meet or can all contact be by email?
- what should the focus of their meetings be?
- is the mentor merely there to respond to mentee requests only when asked, or should the mentor be more proactive in addressing issues of concern, difficulty or difference?

See Appendix B and Appendix E for examples of mentor contracts and training guides.

Contracts

Depending on the level of formality of your scheme, you may decide to draw up contracts for the mentors to sign, detailing both their responsibilities and yours as organiser of the scheme. This may state a minimum required level of engagement

in the scheme, information on what to do about any difficulties and under what circumstances they are allowed to pull out of the scheme. In a simpler sense, it may simply be a document or statement of what their duties are expected to be. Some schemes also require mentees to sign contracts which formalise their involvement in the scheme and let them know what to do if they are not happy with their mentor or with the scheme itself (see Appendix B and Appendix F)

Note on using international students as mentors

There are no restrictions on volunteering by students from the European Union. The same freedom is extended to nationals of Iceland, Norway, Liechtenstein and Switzerland. Romania and Bulgaria joined the European Union in 2007 and (as at Spring 2008) freedom of movement and work has not been extended fully to citizens of these countries. If someone from Bulgaria or Romania wants to volunteer, you should suggest that they contact the UK Border Agency to confirm what they are allowed to do.

If you are working with students from outside the EEA and Switzerland who are in the UK with student immigration permission to work, check the 'Find your way to work' leaflet (DIUS, British Council and Home Office, 2008) at <www.ukcisa.org.uk/files/pdf/working/find_your_way_to_work.pdf>.

More information on international students and volunteering in general can be found in *International students and volunteering: a practical guide* (UKCISA, 2008).

Chapter 5 – Getting it underway and managing relationships

Once the scheme has been advertised within the institution and the mentors recruited and trained, the next stage of the process is to offer the service to mentees and ensure that the scheme gets off the ground.

Letting mentees know of the scheme

A common way to do this is to email all new international students once their place has been confirmed. This allows mentors and mentees to be in touch with each other before their course begins and helps mentees to have any questions answered beforehand. Any email (with application form) needs to be worded carefully in order to ensure that mentees understand what mentoring is. Remember to include a reference to the scheme in your international student handbook or guide.

There may, however, be some misunderstanding over the word mentoring, as to some international students it may imply the support of a tutor, or a teacher, rather than a fellow student offering simple practical advice. So an attractive and almost self-explanatory title for your scheme, and a clear description of the scheme and what the international students can expect to get out of it, is all-important. A simple online or paper application form can also help potential mentees to understand better what the scheme is about (see Appendix D).

If it proves too difficult to let likely mentees know of the scheme before they arrive in the country, another popular method is to advertise the scheme during welcome week or orientation. New international students can be encouraged to sign up once in-country and this can also be an opportunity to address issues of expectation and show what the scheme is about. You could also bring along ex-mentees to explain the scheme and what it entails, or, if the scheme is in its first year, encourage existing international students to become involved and express how such a scheme is a good way to have questions answered, meet people and settle in. A quick turnaround is essential, though, so that new students can be put in touch with mentors and have their questions answered straight away.

The matching process

Once you have a list of mentors and likely mentees, the next stage is to match one group with the other. The criteria that you use to match mentors with mentees will depend upon the aims of your scheme. If your scheme is focused on developing mentee language ability, for example, your mentors are unlikely to include those whose first

language is not English. If your scheme is aimed at mentoring mature students, then age will be one of the key criteria, as mature students would be unlikely to want to be paired with much younger students. If, however, your scheme is one which focuses on settling in a diverse group of international students, then it is helpful to focus your matching process on their course of study. This is seen as the most important common ground, as this will give students something to talk about, regardless of their background or other interests.

Case study

Institution F's long-term aim is to make their mentoring programme become an opt-out, rather than an opt-in programme, as the personal development benefits for both mentor and mentee are well recognised and valued. Their mentor training is a two-day event, which also includes training for staff mentors. There is a week's gap between each day of training in order to allow for a period of self-assessment and reflection on the part of the mentors. Mentors are asked to write a journal on what they have learnt and noticed. Following the second day of training, mentors must undergo a 45-minute assessment and a 15-minute role play – this is assessed through peer assessment, as well as by two members of staff and an external assessor. Mentors receive ongoing support with a three-hour confidential meeting each month. This scheme will soon become an accredited module (15 credits per year) within degree programmes (although this will be rolled out to different schools and departments over time) and credit will be given for the time spent on training, the mentoring itself and the feedback given on the programme.

The mentor/mentee relationship does not have to be one-to-one. In the UKCISA 'Survey on mentoring provision' (2008) (see Appendix L), 58% of schemes assigned two or three mentees to each mentor and a further 23% assigned four or five mentees to each mentor. This allows mentors and mentees to meet up in a group if easier, and allows for a greater exchange of views and a wider support system for the new students. If demand for mentors exceeds supply, then this is an easy way of making sure that all students who want it are able to be mentored.

The matching process itself can be completed as informally or formally as you like, depending on the number of students (and staff) involved in the scheme. The simplest method is to match on the basis of age, sex and course of study where possible and then give mentor and mentee each other's email addresses and let them get on with it. All that is needed is to establish who is to make the initial contact and to make sure that each party is happy to share email addresses (and possibly other contact details).

A more precise (though also more time-consuming) method is to enter all known details of both mentors and mentees on to a spreadsheet and use filters to search and make the best matches you can. Sophisticated databases also exist to help with this process, but it may not be until you have a larger scheme running that this would be worthwhile considering, given the cost of acquiring such software and the training required to run it.

Some institutions allow mentees (and/or mentors) to scrutinise their own databases of information in order to select their own mentors (and/or mentees), although such a method would need an associated method of checking that no mentee had been left without a mentor.

Alternatively, you may wish to have a more unstructured matching process or at least allow the students themselves to complete the matching process. You could facilitate an event whereby this could take place and then collect information at the end on those who have been matched up. In order to avoid some students being left out, some form of structured icebreakers could help to encourage the formation of groups of mentors and mentees, based on their self-selection.

Expectations

Don't promise more than you can really offer. If you cannot guarantee to match students' precise requests, then do not offer this and make sure that all new students are aware of what they can expect to get out of the scheme and what they will *not* get out of the scheme. Make sure that all students involved understand that it is not a weakness to ask for help and that mentoring need not necessarily be seen as support for needy students, but rather as part of a welcoming initiative that supports students new to the institution, as well as providing existing students with an insight into other cultures and traditions.

First meetings

The first time that mentors and mentees meet is often at an event where all mentors and mentees come together to launch the scheme (although they may have been in touch previously via email or through online social networking). Food and drink can be offered if a budget exists, or else the event can simply be used as an icebreaking opportunity. You can spend some time explaining how the scheme will work and the expectations on each side.

If you do not have the budget to hold such an event, then you can simply contact each mentor with the details of their mentee/s and ask them to initiate the first meeting. To make this even easier, you can even provide generic emails which the mentors can adjust themselves (see Appendix G). At the same time, let the mentees know that a mentor has been assigned to them and to expect an email/call soon to set up a first meeting. Many schemes require that all meetings happen on campus or at least in a public place in order to emphasise the proper boundaries of the mentor/mentee relationship. Public places may or may not include the student bar as this depends upon the likely response from mentees to meeting in a space that serves alcohol. These kinds of considerations should be covered in the mentor training process (see Chapter 4).

You may also wish to give mentors (and to a lesser extent mentees) guidance on the areas to focus on, in order to give some structure and purpose to the meetings. For example, first meetings are likely to focus on each other's roles as mentor and mentee, and what each is hoping to get out of the experience, as well as the importance of respecting each other's boundaries. The first meeting should also be the time to agree on the likely frequency of future meetings. Those mentors who are being paid for their time may also therefore need to be given a diary or log of each meeting which they must complete and submit in order to be paid (see Appendix H).

Dealing with difficulties

Make sure that all participants (mentors and mentees) know what to do should any difficulties occur. Difficulties might include:

- mentors and mentees not getting on or having nothing in common
- cultural misunderstandings or confusion
- mentors or mentees not showing up for pre-arranged meetings or not answering emails (this may be linked to differing cultural expectations)
- challenges to the boundaries of the mentor/mentee relationship (such as being asked to help with written work or being asked to help with complex emotional problems or other inappropriate issues)
- mentor (or mentee's) workload has an impact on the time they can commit to the scheme

Ensure that mentors and mentees know who is in overall charge of the scheme and how to contact that person should any difficulty arise. They could, for example, be offered a new mentor, or have the opportunity to drop out of the scheme if they no longer require a mentor.

Closure in the mentor/mentee relationship

The end of any relationship can be a difficult and confusing time. This is no less true for mentors and mentees. You should ensure that each understands how and when their involvement in the scheme should end. Expectations once again come into play, as both should be clear from the outset as to the purpose of the scheme and its duration. Build this part of the scheme into the mentor's training if you can, so they know how to end the official mentor/mentee relationship. Some mentors and mentees may have become friends in the process; do include this as a possible outcome from becoming involved in the mentoring scheme and provide guidance on how to distinguish between a more formal mentor/mentee relationship and an informal friendship.

Chapter 6 – Evaluation and feedback

With effective planning and realistic targets, your mentoring scheme should now be well underway. Mentors and mentees will be getting to know each other, and each should be learning from the other. But how do you assess how well your scheme is working? Collecting feedback and evaluating your scheme are vital in order to assess how effective your planning has been and whether the aims of your scheme are being met.

Monitoring progress

Before your scheme begins, spend time deciding on your preferred method (or methods) of monitoring its progress. Do not leave it until the scheme has come to an end before discovering that half of your mentors dropped out of the scheme or that expectations were not met.

Monitoring methods might include:

- encouraging mentors to take photos or write blogs or diaries about their experience which you can then monitor
- requiring mentors to provide you with an activity log or brief summary of each meeting they have with their mentee
- picking a random sample of mentors and calling them to ask how they are getting on with their mentee (and/or vice versa)
- emailing all mentors and mentees for feedback mid-way through the scheme
- holding a mid-scheme event to gather mentors and mentees together

This interim feedback will help you to make plans for the future, highlight any strengths and weaknesses and allow you to deal with common themes or difficulties shared by several mentors or mentees.

Evaluating the finished scheme

If your scheme is a pilot which you are hoping to widen to other groups of international students in the future, then you cannot do this until you understand the strengths and weaknesses of your current scheme. So decide which data you think is important to collect – this may include, for example, total numbers of mentors and mentees involved, numbers of successful versus unsuccessful mentoring partnerships, most commonly asked questions from mentees, most common difficulties that arose. You might also note or consider whether particular nationalities or subject areas used the mentoring scheme more, or whether any other patterns emerged.

Common evaluation and feedback options might be:

- emailing feedback surveys or questionnaires (to both mentors and mentees) – (see Appendix J and Appendix K)
- holding mentor focus groups to discuss experiences and suggestions for improvements
- requesting regular feedback from mentors (as part of their responsibility from the start, which can be linked to payment if this is offered)
- mentor feedback linked to their training commitment
- collecting data on how many mentor/mentee relationships stayed the course and how many foundered (and why)
- a final event to gather all mentors and mentees where you can find out answers by a show of hands or icebreaker style games or by handing out brief questionnaires
- providing a comment box at an event for those present to make suggestions for improvements or alterations to the scheme (this can allow those involved to give honest feedback)
- collecting quotes from mentors, mentees and staff involved as often as you can – these add life to any publicity materials and will give you an indication of the major successes of your scheme

Think carefully about the questions you ask those involved, which should be linked to the original aims of your scheme. If your scheme aimed to foster greater integration between UK and international students, ask questions that are relevant to this. Or if your scheme aimed to focus on improving the English language ability of new international students, ask them whether they felt the scheme contributed to this.

Think about what you really want to find out. Was it worthwhile? Would mentors/mentees recommend the scheme to others? Did the mentoring scheme help them to settle more quickly than they expected? What did they learn from the scheme? Qualitative feedback is important in helping you to put forward a case for future increased funding for the scheme.

A successful pilot version which is well evaluated and used as the basis for a business plan for further funding may well encourage a small pot of money to be given towards a second year's operation. Even if the scheme is not successful, an evaluation will help you to pinpoint its weaknesses and decide what changes to make in order to offer something more effective in the future. This links back to the long-term view that should be taken if a mentoring scheme is to grow and develop.

Chapter 7 – What next?

Consider the future

Once you have evaluated the success of your scheme and written your report, your next step is to focus on the future of your scheme. Will you be able to run a repeat of the scheme in its original form or will you need to make changes? Were you too ambitious? Consider the feedback you have from the students involved and work out how you can make best use of this. Amend your aims and work plan for the second year of operation taking into account what you have learnt.

Publicise success

If your scheme has been a success, make sure that you publicise it, by writing an article for your institution's website or the student or local newspaper; using quotes and photos that you have collected will add life to what you write. You may wish to offer a prize to any mentors who have committed themselves wholeheartedly to the scheme and gone above and beyond the call of duty. Interview a particular mentor or mentee and use this as a case study which can be publicised and also used as part of the future training of mentors.

Reporting and bidding for future funding

The continuation of your scheme may depend upon senior managers having evidence of its success. If this is the case, once you have evaluated your scheme, make sure you spend time writing a report on it, for submission to those who will decide the future of the scheme. This does not have to be lengthy but should provide a summary of why you felt a mentoring scheme was necessary, what you did and how effective it was. Using quotes, pictures and any data you have will help to strengthen your case and will provide more interesting reading.

If your report is part of a bid for future funding, then have a realistic idea of how much you need in order to expand or run your existing scheme. Show how much you have achieved so far and what more you think could be accomplished with a relatively small sum. If you have anecdotal (or actual) evidence that enquiries to the International Student Support team have fallen as a result of the scheme, then say so. If academics tell you that those being mentored seemed better integrated or more ready to cope with studying in the UK, include this in the plan.

The report can also be disseminated to others in your department, senior managers and those in other departments, including academics and tutors. Producing a report ensures that the scheme does not function in a vacuum with no outside knowledge of its existence. It allows others to comment on and contribute towards the development of the scheme and informs senior managers of successful work that they may wish to publicise more widely.

Appendix A

Further information and resources

Useful websites and sources of general information and resources on mentoring

Mentoring and Befriending Foundation – www.mandbf.org.uk

Volunteering England (has a Student Volunteering section) – www.volunteering.org.uk

Scottish Mentoring Network – www.scottishmentoringnetwork.co.uk

Higher Education Mentoring Network (focuses on HE students mentoring school students) – www.hementornet.org

National Council for Voluntary Organisations – www.ncvo-vol.org.uk

European Mentoring and Coaching Council – www.emccouncil.org

National Mentoring Partnership (USA) – www.mentoring.org

For information on setting up volunteering schemes

International students and volunteering: a practical guide (UKCISA, 2008)

For guidance on international students working in the UK

www.ukcisa.org.uk/files/pdf/working/find_your_way_to_work.pdf

Appendix B

Examples of mentor and mentee contracts

m-friends

Terms & Agreement

This document informs m-friends what is expected from them if they take part in the m-friends intercultural mentoring scheme. Responsibilities of m-friends (mentors and mentees) are clarified. All people wanting to take part in m-friends should read these terms and agreement carefully, before they start their m-friend relationship. **In starting your m-friend relationship you are agreeing to the following:**

- **To take part in the m-friend scheme on a voluntary basis.** The university unfortunately is not able to provide travel or other expenses.
- **To share information with your m-friend(s) via e-mail and/or telephone communication, as well as face-to-face meetings if applicable.**
- **To maintain regular contact with your m-friend** for the duration of the mentoring relationship, spending a minimum of 10 minutes every week in communication with each other.
- **To commit to helping your m-friend for a minimum of four to six months.** M-friends may continue their relationships beyond this time frame if both are able and willing to.
- **To respect your m-friend and maintain personal and professional boundaries.** This includes ensuring that m-friends don't take the role of counsellor or other professional roles that can be accessed through the University etc.
- **To keep personal information confidential.** For more guidance on confidentiality refer to the "Confidentiality" helpsheet on the m-friends Intercultural Mentoring website.
- **To take responsibility for your own personal safety.** M-friends are strongly encouraged to avoid arranging meetings at their homes. It is recommended that face-to-face meetings are arranged in a public place, such as on the University campus or in a café. For more guidance on safe meeting, refer to the "Personal Safety and Arranging Meetings" helpsheet on the m-friend Intercultural Mentoring website. The Intercultural Mentoring team will endeavor to assist with arranging meetings if required.
- **To aim to reply to communications from your m-friend within a week.** Let your m-friend know if you have any planned holidays or are unable for whatever other reason to respond to communications.
- **To inform the Intercultural Mentoring team if you have any questions or problems** relating to the m-friend scheme or your m-friend relationship.

- **To contact the Intercultural Mentoring team to inform them if you are unable to carry on being an m-friend** or if there has been a breakdown in the relationship.
- **To complete an evaluation exercises when requested** by the Intercultural Mentoring team in order to help to improve the scheme.

In starting your m-friend relationship you can access the following from the Intercultural Mentoring Team:

- Information on the roles and responsibilities of m-friends.
- Information, hints and tips by email or website publication on all aspects of developing a successful m-friend mentoring relationship.
- Support and guidance within office hours regarding your m-friend relationship (the Intercultural Mentoring Team aims to respond to all communication from m-friends within a week).
- Address any problems that arise in m-friend relationships when informed, including changing m-friends if required.
- Ensuring that m-friends' personal data is not used for any purpose other than communication in relation specifically to the Intercultural Mentoring programme. For further information, refer to the 'Data Protection Statement' on the m-friend Intercultural Mentoring website.
- Provide m-friends with opportunities to exchange experience and discuss issues on a regular basis.

Friends International Participant Contract

Name:

As a Friends International participant I agree to:

- Always be on time for our scheduled meetings.
- Inform my 'buddy' as soon as possible if I am not going to be able to attend our meeting and then arrange when the next meeting will be.
- Whatever is discussed between my 'buddy' and me stays confidential, unless they feel my own safety is at risk.
- Not make requests that may put my 'buddy' in a difficult situation. (eg, asking them to meet me outside a safe environment or asking them to keep something confidential which I know should be passed on).
- Acknowledge my responsibility to conform to this contract. If there is an issue that we are unable to resolve, I will seek the assistance of the Friends International co-ordinator.

Signed:.....Volunteer

Friends International Volunteer Contract

Name:

As a Friends International Volunteer:

- I agree to undertake the role of volunteer as fully as possible. I will abide by all of the guidelines, policies and requirements presented to me by the Friends International co-ordinator in the Volunteer Handbook.
- I am aware that I will be expected to keep the contents of our meetings confidential except in circumstances where it is felt that the personal safety of another is being put at risk. I am aware that if this situation arises I must pass on this information to the Friends International co-ordinator or another designated member of the university.
- I agree to keep my own and others' personal safety in mind at all times, minimising risks and ensuring that we meet in a safe and comfortable environment for both of us.
- I will attend all meetings with my partners as arranged, unless I make contact in advance to rearrange the scheduled date.
- I agree to inform my Friends International co-ordinator if I feel I am no longer able to participate in this process.
- I agree to be bound by this volunteering agreement until [insert date] when the programme finishes.

Signed:Volunteer

TERMS AND CONDITIONS FOR STUDENT MENTORS

This contract is for one academic year [insert relevant year]. Each mentor is responsible for five students maximum. Each mentor can support the same mentee for four hours maximum. Student mentors will be paid monthly at [insert amount] per hour, upon submission of the Time Record Sheet.

Conditions to be fulfilled by the Student Mentor:

1. Student mentors will be expected to offer support to five mentees maximum during the academic year for up to four hours with the same mentee.
2. Mentors will maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality in respect of the content of their mentoring activities. The supervisory team will assist with any difficult issues that arise.
3. Mentors should remember that they are ambassadors of the university, and should agree to behave in a fashion befitting that of a university representative.
4. Mentors will be expected to keep brief records of all mentoring meetings and evidence of work where possible. These will be given to the supervisory committee on a regular basis.

UNIVERSITY MENTORING SCHEME**Student Agreement**

Date	
Student name	
Student Registration number	
Course	
Department	
Year of study	
Contact address	
Telephone number	
Mobile number	
Email address	

I, understand the attached Terms and Conditions of the Mentoring Scheme, and will adhere to them.

Signed.....

Print name.....

Date.....

Approved by the Scheme Co-ordinator

Signed.....

Print name.....

Date.....

Appendix C

Examples of mentor application forms

Name: _____

- Age: 21 or less
 22–25
 26–30
 31–40
 41–50
 51+

- Sex: Male
 Female

- Are you applying to be: a continuing mentor?
 a new mentor?

What is your home department? _____

What is the full title of your course? _____

Where is your home town and country? _____

University Registration number: _____

Please provide us with your University email address and an email address so we can contact you during the Easter vacation, if different from your university email address:

Email address for correspondence during the summer vacation. Please note that this is the email address we will use when emailing you details of your mentee(s):

Mobile phone number: _____

Any other information you would like us to know? (This might, for example, include a preference for a mentee of the same sex, same religion or another mature student. We cannot promise to meet all such requests but will try to do so as far as possible. Please indicate how important any such request is for you.)

Mentor Scheme - Questionnaire for Mentors

Thank you for volunteering your time to help a stranger settle in at [enter institution name]. To try and match you well with your 'mentee' I need the information below. All your answers will be completely confidential and will not be passed to anyone outside Student Support without your permission.

Details of what is expected of you are at the end of this form. Please send any other questions and completed forms to:

Name of Mentoring Scheme co-ordinator _____

Email address of co-ordinator _____

Family name	<input type="text"/>	Given name	<input type="text"/>
Email	<input type="text"/>	Other email	<input type="text"/>

Nationality	Gender	Age	Subject(s) studied	
			<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Study Abroad experience? (<u>not</u> necessary!)	University/Country	Subject(s)
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Do you want to be matched only with a student from a certain country?

No	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes? Where?	<input type="text"/>
----	--------------------------	-------------	----------------------

Do you belong to any religious denomination?

No	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes? Which?	<input type="text"/>
----	--------------------------	-------------	----------------------

Do you have any dietary preferences? (e.g. vegetarian/halal, etc.)

No Yes? Which?

This section is designed to give us an idea of your personality and interests. It is always difficult to match two people just from what they write, but answering questions in this format, rather than 'write about yourself', makes matching easier.

What is your favourite type of:

Film?	<input style="width: 250px; height: 30px;" type="text"/>
Book?	<input style="width: 250px; height: 30px;" type="text"/>
Exercise?	<input style="width: 250px; height: 30px;" type="text"/>
Hobby?	<input style="width: 250px; height: 30px;" type="text"/>

Tick if you think you are:

Outgoing	<input style="width: 50px; height: 30px;" type="checkbox"/>
Sporty	<input style="width: 50px; height: 30px;" type="checkbox"/>
Serious student	<input style="width: 50px; height: 30px;" type="checkbox"/>
Laid-back	<input style="width: 50px; height: 30px;" type="checkbox"/>

What is your idea of a good time?

Reading a good book	<input style="width: 50px; height: 30px;" type="checkbox"/>
Drinking with friends	<input style="width: 50px; height: 30px;" type="checkbox"/>
Playing sports in a team	<input style="width: 50px; height: 30px;" type="checkbox"/>
Travelling	<input style="width: 50px; height: 30px;" type="checkbox"/>
Being outside in nature	<input style="width: 50px; height: 30px;" type="checkbox"/>
Exercising	<input style="width: 50px; height: 30px;" type="checkbox"/>

What are your priorities?

My studies	<input style="width: 50px; height: 30px;" type="checkbox"/>
My friends	<input style="width: 50px; height: 30px;" type="checkbox"/>
My social life	<input style="width: 50px; height: 30px;" type="checkbox"/>
My family	<input style="width: 50px; height: 30px;" type="checkbox"/>
My religious/spiritual life	<input style="width: 50px; height: 30px;" type="checkbox"/>
Broadening my outlook	<input style="width: 50px; height: 30px;" type="checkbox"/>

Feel free to add anything about yourself, groups you are member of, other interests etc.

The way the scheme runs:

As the new international students send in their forms (mainly last-minute!) I will match them with mentors and inform both parties by email when they have been matched. You are asked to meet your 'mentee' at an initial gathering in [insert location] and after that at least once a week for the first five weeks and then once every two weeks/once a month for at least 30 minutes a session. We hope to match you in the second week of January, but the international students tend to send in forms right up to their arrival.

Appendix D

Examples of mentee application forms

Mentees Application Form

Please use black or dark blue ink to complete this form and write **clearly** in CAPITALS.

Name _____

Title Mr
 Mrs
 Miss
 Ms
 Other

Age 21 or under
 22–25
 26–30
 31–40
 41+

Where is your home town and country? _____

Department name: _____

Course title: _____

Contact details _____

Email address: _____

Mobile phone number: _____

Home phone number: _____

Tell us a bit more...

What are your interests?

Why would you like a mentor?

University/College application number (if known) _____

I give my permission for the front page of this form to be photocopied and passed on to my mentor.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Please use this space if you have any information you would like to give to the Mentoring Scheme organisers, but do *not* want your mentor to have. This will be treated confidentially.

Any other information you would like us to know? (This might, for example, include a preference for a mentor of the same sex or same religion, or another mature student. We cannot promise to meet all such requests but will try to do so as far as possible. Please indicate how important any such request is for you.)

Once completed, this form should be returned to [insert relevant details].

Mentor Scheme – International Student Application

If you think you would like an experienced student to help you settle in when you first arrive you can apply for a mentor by filling in this form. Please remember that demand usually outweighs supply, but we will do our best to find you someone.

- All your answers will be **completely confidential** and will not be passed to anyone outside Student Support without your permission.
- Emails with attachments may sometimes be blocked for security (virus) reasons so if this happens please just copy this document and paste it inside the body of an email or send by post to the address below.
- You will be told if you have a mentor on your arrival, or before if we find one and you have given permission for us to pass on your email address to your mentor.

[insert details of scheme organisers]

Family name	<input type="text"/>	Given name	<input type="text"/>
-------------	----------------------	------------	----------------------

Your email	<input type="text"/>	Can we give your email address to your mentor before you arrive?	<input type="text"/>
------------	----------------------	--	----------------------

Nationality	Gender	Age	Subjects you will study	
			<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Which university are you attending?	Country	University
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

What subjects do you study there?	<input type="text"/>
-----------------------------------	----------------------

Do you belong to any religious denomination?

No	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes? Which?	<input type="text"/>
----	--------------------------	-------------	----------------------

Do you have any dietary preferences? (eg vegetarian, halal, etc.)

No Yes? Which?

This section is designed to give us an idea of your personality and interests. It is always difficult to match two people just from what they write, but answering these questions in this format, rather than 'write about yourself', helps make the process easier.

What is your favourite type of:

Movie?	<input type="text"/>
Book?	<input type="text"/>
Exercise?	<input type="text"/>
Hobby?	<input type="text"/>

Tick if you think you are:

Outgoing	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sporty	<input type="checkbox"/>
Serious student	<input type="checkbox"/>
Relaxed in attitude	<input type="checkbox"/>

What is your idea of a good time?

Reading a good book	<input type="checkbox"/>
Drinking with friends	<input type="checkbox"/>
Playing sports in a team	<input type="checkbox"/>
Travelling	<input type="checkbox"/>
Being outside in nature	<input type="checkbox"/>
Exercising	<input type="checkbox"/>

What are your priorities?

My studies	<input type="checkbox"/>
My friends	<input type="checkbox"/>
My social life	<input type="checkbox"/>
My family	<input type="checkbox"/>
My religious/spiritual life	<input type="checkbox"/>
Broadening my outlook	<input type="checkbox"/>

Feel free to write about your interests, groups you are a member of, your personality, etc.

The way the scheme runs:

- We will try to find a mentor for you and if we do before you come to [insert institution name] we will give your email address to them so that they can contact you before your arrival and we will inform you that we have done so. The students are doing exams in January so will be busy and the match-up party will be probably be the first time you can meet them.
- Please return your application as soon as you can so that we can match you in good time.
- Applications received after [insert date] will be too late, sorry.

Look forward to seeing you at [insert institution name],
[insert name and email address scheme organiser]

Appendix E

Examples of mentor training programmes

Training Programme

9.00am	Getting to know each other Practical information How to structure a session
10.30	Break
10.45	Placement Service Ideas for sessions Practice session
1.00pm	End of session

What they will expect of you:

- someone who has greater **fluency** than they do in the use of English
- **communicative** skills and **confidence**
- a more **practical** and **relaxed** use of language than is used for study purposes
- some useful insights about **UK culture**/culture in the workplace
- a better chance of **finding a placement** in the UK...opening up job opportunities for the future

Value for time!

What we don't expect you to do:

- become best friends with the group (but you might!)
- solve their personal/social problems (that is not your role!)
- put yourself in a situation where you feel uncomfortable
- proof read their work

Remember to refer students where necessary ...

Payment:

You will be paid monthly [insert amount] per hour for:

- obligatory training
- one hour teaching per week

In order to receive payment you will need to submit completed attendance forms

Ideas for sessions:

- Getting to know each other
- Interview language
- Networking
- Looking for placements
- Placement expectations
- Behaviour in the workplace
- British culture
- Assessment exercise/case studies

Mentoring at [insert institution name]

Training Session – Programme

10.00am	Introduction and welcome Domestics Icebreakers
10.15	The nuts and bolts of mentoring at [insert institution name]
10.30	Culture shock, cultural awareness and difference <i>Mature, Commuter, International, Traditional Students</i>
11.15	Supporting Students Boundaries, confidentiality, signposting, looking after yourself Split into two groups (interactive)
11.45	Break
12.00pm	Positive Mentoring Top tips, student experiences, scenarios, informal
12.30	Making your skills count Mentoring award/credits available
12.40	Questions and answers
1.00	End of session

Appendix F

Examples of advice on safety and confidentiality

[insert name of mentoring scheme]
INTERCULTURAL MENTORING

Helpsheet: arranging meetings and personal safety

This helpsheet aims to provide some guidelines when it comes to meeting your m-friend in person.

Initially m-friendships will be conducted through email. You may decide that you want to meet one another once your m-friend has arrived at [insert institution name] – or you may decide that you just want to carry on emailing one another or using the telephone to talk. You may decide on a mixture of these forms of communication.

The m-friend scheme is open to students and staff at [insert institution name] in order to reduce a level of risk. However, to become a registered m-friend does not involve a vetting process from the ISO team. It is therefore important that you still take precautions to protect yourself when meeting your m-friend. Technically, despite having communicated via email, you are still strangers to one another. Hopefully you will never experience any difficulties when meeting your m-friend. Without wanting to create panic, below are some practical precautions you should take for your own personal safety. Keep these in mind when meeting face to face.

- Arrange to meet in public place at the university/college, for example in a café or bar. **Do not** arrange to meet in each other's homes.
- Always tell someone else where you are going, the name of your m-friend and when you expect to return. Possibly arrange for someone to check up on you during your meeting (eg by phone).
- Take your mobile phone.
- **Do not** leave your personal items or drinks unattended.
- Record the name and contact details of the person/people you are meeting.
- Do not enter a building if you don't feel comfortable or safe.
- If driving, ensure that you belong to a breakdown service, and that you know where you are going and how to get there.
- Try to telephone each other before actually meeting, just to find out a bit more about each other. This may help you feel more confident.
- Trust your instincts. If someone makes you feel uncomfortable, don't take the risk. Make your excuse to leave and inform the ISO team as soon as you can.

Meeting face to face can be a great way to learn from one another. Attending an ISO event for international students may be another way that m-friends can meet safely and get to know one another better. Contact the ISO team to find out when they are running events and whether you can attend.

Appendix G

Example of generic mentor email

Generic email to give mentors

Dear [name of mentee],

Hello. My name is [insert name of mentor] and I am your [insert institution name] mentor.

I look forward to meeting you when you arrive but thought that it would be useful to make contact now so I can answer any questions you might have.

I remember I wanted to know lots of things before I started from how much things cost in [enter town/city] to questions about module choices.

Most people feel both excited and nervous at the prospect of leaving home so if you feel like that don't worry, it's normal.

Hope to hear from you soon,

[insert name of mentor]

PS Once you arrive you will be given a university email address. Please let me know your address as soon as you have it so I can keep in touch with you.

Appendix H

Example of mentoring monitoring methods

Mentoring Scheme

Time Record Report

Name:

Month

Signature of MentorDate.....

Co-ordinator AuthorisationDate.....

Date	Time	Mentee seen (please enter name)

Please ensure this form is completed and submitted by the end of month to [enter relevant contact details]

Reflective diary

Please enter the dates, or frequency of meetings/emails/phone calls, and a brief description of your activity in the table below and how much time you devoted to it. Include things like meetings, personal planning & preparation time, attending training as well as when you are actively involved in the project/event. Please add new rows as needed.

Date	Reflection: <i>eg What did you do? What did you learn? What will you do next time?</i>	How much time?

Summary of your experiences as a Volunteer

In the box below please write a short summary (250 words minimum) on what you have gained from your volunteering and if it is something you would recommend other students to do. This article will be used to improve our understanding of student volunteering in all its different forms and it may be used to help promote volunteering to other students:

Well done and thank you!

Appendix J

Example of mentor evaluation form

Mentoring Scheme

Mentor Session End Evaluation

In order to monitor progress, please could you complete this form during your last mentoring session. Use in conjunction with the profile of your mentee.

Name of mentor.....

Date..... Venue.....

- 1) How do you feel you have supported your mentee in the three areas identified in the mentee profile?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

- 2) How do you feel you have supported your mentee with action planning?

.....
.....
.....

- 3) Do you feel your mentee has changed their attitude about themselves, study or school in any way?

.....
.....
.....

4) What part do you think mentoring has played in this change of attitude?

.....
.....
.....

5) Do you feel that it has been a worthwhile experience?

.....
.....
.....

6) In what way will you use this mentoring experience within your own action planning and goal setting?

.....
.....
.....

7) Mentoring is a great way of sampling your future career or proving you have ability to apply key skills. How will you use this experience in a professional context?

.....
.....
.....

8) Do you wish to mentor for another term or be recommended for future paid mentoring opportunities?

.....
.....
.....

Appendix K

Example of mentee feedback form

Mentoring scheme evaluation (for mentees)

Personal information (optional)

- 1) Name:
 - 2) Age:
 - 3) Course studying:.....
 - 4) Level (under/postgraduate and year):.....
 - 5) Nationality.....
 - 6) Name of group leader/facilitator
 - 7) How many mentoring sessions did you attend?
- What were your reasons for not attending?

- 8) Are you looking for a placement as part of your course? Yes No
- 9) Are you looking for part-time work? Yes No
- 10) Do you already have a part-time job? Yes No
- 11) Do you intend to stay in the UK to work after study? Yes No
- 12) Will you apply for the International Graduate Scheme? Yes No
- 13) What was the most important reason that you wanted a mentor (please rate)?

	Not important			Very important		
	1	2	3	4	5	6
a) practise informal English	1	2	3	4	5	6
b) meet a UK student	1	2	3	4	5	6
c) social activity	1	2	3	4	5	6
d) meet other international students	1	2	3	4	5	6
e) prepare for workplace	1	2	3	4	5	6
f) help with finding a placement	1	2	3	4	5	6

14. How helpful was the mentoring scheme in the following areas **for you** (please rate)?

	Not at all helpful			Very helpful		
a) practising informal English	I	2	3	4	5	6
b) meeting a UK student	I	2	3	4	5	6
c) social activity	I	2	3	4	5	6
d) meeting other international students	I	2	3	4	5	6
e) preparing for workplace	I	2	3	4	5	6
f) help with finding a placement	I	2	3	4	5	6

Mentoring content

15. What did you find most useful?

16. What did you find least useful?

Your expectations

17. Did the mentoring scheme meet your expectations? **Yes** **No**

18. In what ways did the mentoring scheme **not** meet your expectations?

.....

19. Was it promoted correctly to you? **Yes** **No**

20. Would you recommend the mentoring scheme to your friends? **Yes** **No**

Your Mentor

22. Please rate your mentor against the following criteria:

	Not very good			Very good		
a) Professional	I	2	3	4	5	6
b) Interesting	I	2	3	4	5	6
c) Prepared	I	2	3	4	5	6
d) Fun/creative	I	2	3	4	5	6
e) Good at involving other people/friends	I	2	3	4	5	6
f) Interested in you	I	2	3	4	5	6
g) Experience of workplace	I	2	3	4	5	6
h) Knowledge of English language	I	2	3	4	5	6
i) Punctual	I	2	3	4	5	6
j) Kept in contact	I	2	3	4	5	6

23. Any more comments about your mentor?

.....

.....

.....

Overview of programme

24. Do you think it is a good idea to run the scheme next year? **Yes** * **No** *

25. How many mentoring sessions would be ideal?

26. When would you want your mentoring experience to begin?
.....

27. Where is the best place to meet?.....

28. How is the best way to organise meetings with your mentor?

Other comments
.....

Appendix L

UKCISA survey on mentoring provision

In preparation for this guide, UKCISA undertook a survey of HE and FE institutions with the aim of discovering the range and scope of mentoring programmes set up specifically for international students.

A total of 154 institutions completed the survey. Below is a summary of the main findings.

- 29% of the total indicated that they run a mentoring scheme specifically for international students (and 71% do not)
- Of those who do run a scheme (37 respondents), 49% run a mixture of pre- and post-arrival mentoring, while a further 46% run a post-arrival scheme only
- 97% of those who run a mentoring scheme specifically for international students focus their scheme on the settling-in process, 29% include an academic slant to their scheme and 22% offer language exchange as part of the mentoring process
- 76% of mentoring schemes specifically targeted at international students have started within the last three years
- 57% of 26 respondents indicated that they assign two or three mentees to each mentor, with a further 23% assigning four or five mentees to each mentor
- 39% of 28 respondents do not gather feedback or evaluated their scheme in other ways, while 61% do
- 52% of those who ran such a scheme judged it to have been a success, with a further 41% being unable to answer either way



9-17 St Albans Place
London N1 0NX
T +44 (0)20 7288 4330
F +44 (0)20 7288 4360
www.ukcisa.org.uk

UKCISA is a company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales (Company Number: 4507287) and a charity registered with the Charity Commission for England and Wales (Charity Number: 1095294). Its registered office is at 9-17 St Albans Place London N1 0NX.