

The Royal Meteorological Society's Mentoring Guidelines

Thank you for showing an interest in the Royal Meteorological Society's mentoring scheme.

What is mentoring?

Mentoring provides the opportunity for an exchange of knowledge and expertise between someone in the early stages of their career, mentored by someone with several years of experience in the field. Mentoring is a professional relationship that provides support and guidance regarding professional and personal development that lasts for the duration of a fixed-time scale.

Aims

Many organisations offer mentoring schemes to new staff or all staff. However, at the RMetS we recognise the wealth of expertise available across our membership and that people might benefit from mentoring from outside their organisation.

Most of our members will recognise that others have had an impact on their careers, either informally, or else as formal mentors, at different times of their careers/lives. The opportunity to voice your concerns, doubts or other feelings and getting support and advice from a senior person may have made all the difference to you having the confidence to achieve something.

By being part of the Royal Meteorological Society's mentoring scheme, there are a wealth of benefits achievable for both parties.

Topics that individuals may want mentoring on:

- Career development: Getting a promotion, moving institution or organisation, changing field, applying for a fellowship or a job;
- Support and advice in identifying and planning personal and professional development, or at key transition points;
- Work-life balance and family events (returning from secondments, Maternity or Parental Leave, or career breaks);
- Group or team development;
- Fieldwork;
- Outreach, social media or media work;
- Applying for a job, CV surgery;
- Equality and Diversity;
- Skills related mentoring (developing new skills, communication, working with others);
- A second opinion or sounding board for ideas;
- Considering or fulfilling Leadership and Management roles;
- Working effectively in support or administrative roles;
- Gaining access to networks or contacts.

Benefits

for mentors:

- **Enhances professional skills** – mentoring can help provide the skills needed to have a competitive edge.
- **Continuous Professional Development (CPD)** – mentoring can be used as something that can support your CPD record
- **Support your profession** - Pass professional standards, values, knowledge and experience from one generation to another
- **Give back** – help younger scientists at the start of their career and foster a greater sense of community amongst the meteorological community
- **Reverse mentoring** – mentors can develop new skills, taught from their mentor, such as social media skills

for mentees:

- **Gain knowledge** – have access to someone who can provide an insight into your work and career
- **Overcome challenges** - learn from those who have experience of how to develop solutions and overcome obstacles or problems
- **Successful job strategy** – find out practical tips of planning a successful job search
- **Develop your skills** – whether this is your ability to self-reflect, understand, learn new skills or improve your approach to problem-solving
- **Identify weaknesses** – be self-aware and able to identify your weaknesses, to ensure you work towards solving and overcoming these
- **Improve self-confidence** – improve your conversation skills in a professional setting
- **Networking** – build an informal list of contacts through discovering names, companies, organisations and opportunities you may not know existed
- **Career support** – gain valuable information and insight whether you're transitioning between career stage, organisations or fields, as well as have someone look over your CV.

Matching mentors and mentees

One of the most important factors in the success of a mentoring programme is ensuring the mentee is matched with an appropriate mentor. The more information you can provide us with, regarding what you hope to achieve from being part of the mentoring scheme, the more useful this is to us. This will help focus our search to finding someone with the right industry knowledge and specific skills and experiences, most important to you, and will ensuring the right pairing is chosen. This will ensure you get the most out of the Society mentoring scheme.

Requirements

The mentoring schemes is available to anyone who is a member of The Royal Meteorological Society.

Structure

Before the mentoring relationship begins, both the mentor and mentee will agree the frequency of meetings. In order for the programme to be successful, it's important that the amount of contact and communication is understood by both sides. It is recommended that a log is kept of all meetings, and major communications, as a way of ensuring the expected amount of contact is maintained.

1. Getting to know your mentor/mentee

After the society has matched a mentor and mentee, you will most likely be introduced to each other via email or Skype. Apart from the first introduction, in which the mentor will take the first lead of contact, the mentee will lead other communications and should organise meetings. It is expected this is completed within one week of being introduced.

2. Meetings and keeping in touch

At the first remote meeting, it would be useful to discuss expectations from both sides. We recommend that for the duration of the scheme, that you are in contact with each other at least once per month. Contact can be via email, telephone, Skype, or in person.

3. Evaluation

At the end of the scheme, both the mentor and mentee will be expected to complete an evaluation form. It is anticipated that most mentoring relationships will last for 6-12 months. If you wish to continue the relationship beyond this, that can be agreed between the parties involved.

Notes for mentors:

The general role of the mentor is to guide and support the mentee. This will involve the mentor sharing their own observations and experiences. The following points suggest ways how the mentor should conduct discussions with the mentee:

- Facilitate discussions with the mentee about their goals from the mentoring scheme
- Create a friendly and confidential environment, building a rapport with the mentee
- Listen actively to the mentee
- Ask open questions and prompt deeper thinking
- Make suggestions, without being prescriptive
- Provide constructive and positive feedback
- Summarise the main themes of the meeting

Notes for mentees

The mentee shares a significant part of the responsibility for making the mentoring relationship productive and rewarding. The mentee's main responsibilities include:

- Think of goals they would like to achieve from the mentoring relationship
- Keeping to agreements made with the mentor regarding meetings and communication
- Prepare for and fully participate in meetings with the mentor
- Keep the mentor informed of your progress, and any problems you encounter
- Keep records of meetings and progress

Outside support for both mentors and mentees

There will be a mentoring co-ordinator who will match mentors and mentees. They will contact you regarding how the relationship is progressing, and for evaluation at the end of the scheme. The mentoring co-coordinator should be the first point of reference should any questions or difficulties arise. Simply get in touch, and the mentoring co-coordinator will be able to provide support.

Mentoring Agreement

Before a mentoring relationship is confirmed, an agreement between the mentor and mentee will need to be completed.