

Mentor Handbook: SPH Mentoring Program



1.0 Welcome

Thank you for signing up to be a mentor, and for playing a vital part in the School of Public Health's Early Career Researcher (ECR) Mentoring Program.

Our mentor program runs for approximately one year in duration.

Mentoring others is an important part of career development for research-engaged academics.

- UQ's [Criteria for Academic Performance Policy](#) emphasises the importance of mentoring others, particularly for more senior academics.
- Visit <https://ppl.app.uq.edu.au/content/5.80.19-mentoring> for more information on UQ's mentoring policy.

2.0 The principles underlying our program

The principles upon which the program is based include:

1. Mentoring is a positive support mechanism to assist early career academics to take ownership of their own career development and is optional.
2. Both mentees and mentors are willing to invest their effort and time to positively contribute to an effective mentoring partnership.
3. There is an effective working relationship based upon mutual respect and trust with a focus on an open, honest and constructive dialogue around development.
4. The program fits into and around the performance appraisal process to guide the professional development of ECRs.
5. Mentors have a focus on the mentee which is driven by areas for continued professional development and a view to overcoming any challenges in achieving performance objectives.
6. Mentees should not limit opportunities for advice-seeking to mentors - other opportunities for advice in areas of specialism/expertise should be pursued and form part of an overall professional development plan as appropriate; these other opportunities may be identified by the mentor, mentee or supervisor.

2.0 What makes an ideal mentor?

Experienced

Mentors should ideally be mid-career or senior researchers, or at the stage where they have significant experience to share with others with respect to research and academic practices. These include, but are not limited to, ensuring the mentee is aware of the research and teaching objectives of the School, interpreting and discussing any feedback and/or evaluation of teaching (e.g. student feedback), commenting upon draft publications, and critiquing & commenting on grant proposals

Trustworthy

The mentor's primary focus should be the professional development of their mentee. As the mentor/mentee discussions take place outside the line management relationship, they should be handled in confidence to enable the appropriate level of trust and support.

Accessible

The mentoring program does have occasions at which mentors will be expected to provide support, and these opportunities will be negotiated as required. However, mentors ideally should be open to providing support and guidance to mentees as requested, within reason.

Driven to lead

A mentor's contribution to mentoring early career staff can be used as evidence of collegiality, leadership and management in the assessment of their own overall performance.

Committed

Given our program runs for approximately one year, we would expect that mentors could commit to supporting a mentee over the space of a year, though the total time commitment is not expected to be onerous, as per our sample schedule of commitment in section 3.0 below.

3.0 Mentoring Program sample schedule of commitment

At this stage, we would expect mentors to meet with mentees at least four times during the space of the program.

Date	Task	Details
July/August 2021	Start of program check-in	This is a meeting held for mentees in July/August to discuss concerns, introduce key senior and support staff, and develop a personal values proposition.
August 2021	Initial group check-in	This is a meeting held for mentees and their mentoring team where mentees give a brief presentation, the mentoring teams provide feedback to guide their development, and an ongoing mentor is identified.
As soon as you are matched with a mentee	Introductory meeting	This is your opportunity for an informal meeting with your mentee to get to know each other. A list of introductory questions are listed in section 6.0 below.
July 2022	End of program check in	This is a meeting between the mentor and mentee, providing an opportunity for targeted guidance, and to review progress over the previous year.
Monthly	Regular capacity building workshops	These workshops are run by the ECR committee and will cover topics such as budgeting, writing for impact, IP, media training, the art of pitching, building your personal value proposition and more

4.0 How are mentors matched with mentees?

The SPH Mentoring Program Coordinator will work with the SPH Research Support team, with guidance from Division leaders, to match mentors and mentees who nominate for the program.

5.0 Getting to know each other

We will provide you with information about your mentee that is collected at the time they sign up for the program. We recommend the following questions to establish your relationship:

1. Why are your goals for being involved in the program?
2. What is your experience to date?
3. When was your PhD conferred?
4. What was your PhD topic?
5. What is your current research area of interest?
6. What are your strengths?
7. What are the areas you most want to improve?
8. What are your short and long term career goals?
9. Are you likely to want to catch up outside of the proposed program schedule?
10. Do you have any commercial aspects to your work that are subject to confidentiality?
11. Are you involved in any professional associations or networks?

6.0 Problem solving

If for some reason, you have concerns with any aspect of the program, please contact a.dyda@uq.edu.au as soon as possible so that we can assist.



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