



MENTORING/PEER TO PEER SUPPORT HANDBOOK UK HE COPYRIGHT COMMUNITY

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UK HE Copyright community

Mentoring /Peer -to-Peer Scheme Support

Introduction

As a copyright professional, with experience and knowledge, you can play a vital role as a mentor, in supporting colleagues in other institutions with Copyright responsibilities. Your insight, encouragement, and experience can make a real difference in helping colleagues in other institutions to feel seen, supported, and empowered.

This supportive scheme is designed to:

- Build a strong peer to peer and professional copyright community.
- Encourage personal and career development for copyright professionals in the HE UK sector.

The Mentor

As a mentor, you will:

- Offer guidance and encouragement
- Share your experiences and insights as a copyright professional
- Help mentees navigate professional issues
- Be a trusted point of contact and support

You don't need to have all the answers — just being present, listening, and sharing your journey as a copyright professional can have a powerful impact.

The Mentee

As a mentee, you will:

- Think in advance what you want to be discussed during the meeting
- Take ownership of this relationship. You will be responsible to reach out to your mentor to arrange any meetings.
- Be open about what worries you and trust your mentor.
- Express yourself in a professional manner

A Dynamic Relationship

Mentoring is a relationship — and like any relationship, it can grow and change over time. Mentoring partnerships typically last between six and twelve months.

You're encouraged to revisit your expectations regularly throughout the partnership.

Take time to check in with each other to make sure the mentoring relationship continues to meet both of your needs.

The first mentoring conversation

Although this scheme is not a formal agreement, we hope this document can be used as guidance, that can help mentors and mentees to begin their conversation. The initial meeting is a chance to:

- Get to know each other
- Build rapport and trust
- Understand the mentee's goals and hopes for the mentoring relationship
- Decide if the match feels right for both of you

If it feels like a good fit, you can then move into the next part of the meeting: laying the foundations of your mentoring partnership.

This includes exploring the following key areas:

- Mentoring Meeting Essentials
- Trust and Confidentiality
- Shaping Your Mentoring Partnership

These sections support you in setting shared expectations, agreeing on communication and meeting frequency, and tailoring the experience to suit both your needs. This is a flexible guide — not a checklist — that can evolve and adapt to your needs and style as your partnership grows.

Mentoring Meeting Essentials

To help your mentoring relationship run smoothly, it's helpful to agree on a few practical expectations early on.

These can be used as a checklist to guide your first conversation and revisited as needed. Mentor and mentee might choose to keep this in a shared document or visual format to make it easy to access and update.

Meeting Frequency & Format

- Aim to meet up to 6 times over a 12-month period (at least).
- Each meeting should last around 1 hour.
- Meetings can be remote, in-person (if you are both based in the same geographical area) or hybrid — whatever works best for both of you.

Questions to Discuss Together

- How often will you meet, and where?
- Will your meetings be remote, in-person, or hybrid?
- What's the best way to contact each other if plans change?
- What kind of support or check-ins do you expect between meetings?

Being Present and Prepared

- Arrive on time and ready to engage.
- Choose a quiet, comfortable space for your meetings.
- Respect each other's time and commitments.

Communication & Flexibility

- Let your mentoring partner know as soon as possible if you need to reschedule or are running late.
- Agree on how you'll communicate between meetings (e.g. email, Teams, WhatsApp).
- Discuss what level of contact is appropriate outside of scheduled meetings

Trust and Confidentiality

Trust is at the heart of a successful mentoring relationship. The mentor's role is to create a space that feels safe enough, respectful, and open — where the mentee feels comfortable sharing their thoughts, challenges, and aspirations.

The Mentor

Principles of Mentoring

Here are some guidelines to support mentors and mentees in creating an environment that encourages a healthy, supportive mentoring partnership.

Confidentiality is Key

Everything discussed in mentoring meetings is expected remain private — unless agree that it would be helpful to share something with an external person that could help with an specific matter.

Set Clear Boundaries

The mentor needs to define what can and cannot offer as a mentor. Mentors are not expected to have all the answers or act as counsellors.

Shaping your Mentoring Partnership

Your First Meeting: Aligning Expectations

Your first meeting is a chance to begin building a strong foundation for the mentoring relationship.

It's a space for the mentee to share their hopes and goals, and for both to agree on how you'll work together.

The mentee may bring aspirations related to:

- Professional questions in copyright
- Career planning
- Confidence and self-belief
- Building networks or accessing opportunities

Alongside exploring these goals, this is an opportunity for the person in the role of mentor to co-create a supportive environment. This helps build mutual trust and sets the tone for open, honest conversations.

Here are some questions that could help to guide the conversation:

- What will help your mentoring partnership feel safe and supportive?
- How will you create a space where both of you feel comfortable speaking openly?
- How will you let each other know if a topic feels uncomfortable or off-limits?

Supporting Growth Through Reflection and Action

Mentoring is a journey — one that evolves through shared goals, regular reflection, and meaningful follow-up. This section brings together key practices to help mentor and mentee stay aligned and responsive throughout the partnership.

Revisit and Reflect

As the mentoring relationship develops, take time to revisit any goals the mentee shared during the first meeting. This helps keep the partnership focused and intentional.

The mentor might ask:

- What does your mentee hope to gain from the partnership?
- What kind of support or guidance are they looking for?
- How can you work together to help them move toward these goals?

Checking In

Goals may shift over time, so regular check-ins are important. These can be brief moments at the start of a meeting or more intentional reflections mid-way through the partnership.

Helpful prompts include:

- How often will you check in on progress toward the mentee's goals?
- What signs will show that the partnership is meeting their needs?
- How will you adjust your approach if the mentee's goals change?

Commitment to Action

Mentoring is most effective when it leads to reflection, growth, and action. While mentors offer support and guidance, it's the mentee who takes ownership of their learning journey.

Both mentors and mentees may agree to take actions between meetings — such as exploring a topic, sharing resources, or making introductions. These actions should feel collaborative and optional, not prescriptive.

Following Up

To keep momentum going, it's helpful to check in on agreed actions at the start of each meeting. The mentor might ask:

- How will the mentee follow up on actions from the previous meeting?
- What progress has been made?
- Are there any barriers or challenges that need to be discussed?
- Do any goals or actions need to be adjusted?

The Mentee

It is important to remember that the mentee is responsible for their own growth therefore they need to be actively involved in the discussions that take place. They are taking control of their development by managing themselves, using the mentors as facilitators.

The responsibility for the success of the mentoring relationship is one that is shared by both parties. It is the mentee's responsibility to input into the relationship building the mentor's involvement and commitment. The mentee can develop and support the relationship by:

- **Clarity** – clear communication of needs and aspirations to and from the mentor will make the meetings focused and both parties will know where they stand.
- **Networking** – use any contacts and confidential information sensibly, seeking permission from the mentor when using their name or details.
- **Taking action** – agreed outcomes should be followed through within the time frames discussed
- **Not making demands** – that cross the boundaries agreed during the contracting phase unless these have been re-set, especially around the issues of time and networking
- **Remembering** – mentoring is just as much the mentee's responsibility; it is a two-way process and the mentee will get what they are prepared to put in.

Preparing for Mentoring Sessions

To make effective use of the mentoring time the mentee needs to prepare by reflecting on their past experiences. This will develop understanding, consideration for future needs and exploring options and strategies with the mentor's input.

The mentee can start this process by considering the following prefixes to sentences:

- I am experiencing difficulty with...
- In terms of support, I may need...
- I want to develop my skill(s) in... What would you suggest?
- Things that have gone well are...
- How can I find out more about...?
- I have appreciated your support and ideas on... etc.

One way to ensure that mentees can reflect on their time with their mentor is to use some form of learning log, journal, or diary system.

A learning log/recording system allows the mentee to self-review, and it is through this process that more learning and development occurs and more importantly, helps the mentee to take ownership of the process. They can then, reflect, recognise achievements, analyse practices, and identify areas for development. Some of the common questions, which may be used to help the mentee reflect, are:

- What have I achieved?
- What have been difficult areas when...?
- What analysis has come from...?
- What have I learned from...?
- What do I need to change so I can...?
- What do I need to develop to allow me to...?

Things to include and remember when using a learning log/recording system:

- Reflection and analysis – concentrate on key learning points.
- Support and development needs – be specific.
- Difficulties that were encountered and how they were resolved.
- Identified strengths.
- Achievements and successes.

Appendix I

Initial Meeting Checklist

The following headings might provide a useful checklist for Mentee and Mentor to use during the initial meeting to check out suitability.

Purpose and initial outcomes:

- Why the need for mentoring?
- What you hope to achieve as outcomes
- Current situation
- Strengths/Weaknesses
- Potential Challenges over next 12 months
- Initial areas for mentoring focus

Relationship:

- What each of you want from the relationship
- What each of you bring to it

How the mentoring is to be carried out:

- What is going to make it work
- Style of mentoring
- Process/format you will follow during the mentoring sessions
- How you will know that mentoring is working for you both
- How you will recognise that the mentoring need has finished

The mentor role and responsibility:

- Expectations by mentee of mentor
- What mentor is prepared to do/give to the process – how much time is the mentor prepared to spend
- Checking out whether mentor skills/attributes/style match the needs and personality of the mentee
- The mentee role and responsibility:
 - Expectations by mentor of mentee
 - What mentee is prepared to do and give to the process

- What mentee is prepared to offer the mentor in terms of mentor's own development
- Checking out whether the mentee is the right person for the mentor to work with

Developing the Ground Rules:

- Initial duration of whole mentoring process
- Venues, timings, frequency, and length of each meeting
- Whether there will be informal contact between meetings
- Boundaries (including confidentiality, limitations to the work & clarity that the mentee does not use the mentor's name or authority without the mentor's permission)
- Signing Off – How you will do this and what it means when you get that far
- Who is driving the overall mentoring process (normally the mentee) and what this means in practice

Appendix II

Checklist for Mentors Giving Feedback

- (a) always have the mentee's best interests at heart
- (b) always start with some positive feedback
- (c) prioritise feedback to avoid overload if necessary
- (d) observe the mentee's reactions and be responsive to these
- (e) concentrate on facts and behaviours rather than emotions and personalities
- (f) avoid blaming the mentee for all problems: seek 'the big picture'
- (g) acknowledge and summarise mentee's contributions
- (h) provide critical feedback in a supportive way
- (i) strike a balance between being too informal and too distant
- (j) strike a balance between being overly positive and overly negative
- (k) work with the mentee to interpret the situations being discussed
- (l) probe mentee's responses as necessary to derive further insights

Appendix III

Mentoring Review Form

Role:	Mentee or Mentor
Duration of Mentoring Relationship	

1. What have been the benefits from the mentoring relationship? What impact has the mentoring relationship had on you, personally and professionally?

2. Did you encounter any issues / problems regarding the mentoring relationship?

3. Do you think that the agreed targets / objectives were achieved?

4. Please detail below. _____

5. Would you recommend the programme to other professionals in the network?

6. How could the programme be improved?
