

Royal Television Society Bursary Mentoring

There are many types of mentoring, all of which are focused upon providing a helping relationship, the mentor, providing the benefit of their experience and expertise to an individual mentee or occasionally a group of mentees

What is mentoring in the context of bursary students?

In this context, mentoring is a supportive relationship between an established industry professional and a second or third year undergraduate seeking to work in a similar role after they graduate. We would hope that the mentor would be able to support the mentee by providing helpful comments on the quality of work produced, helping the student to develop their CV and portfolio if appropriate helping them to secure internships or approach potential future employers. It is hoped that this relationship would be:

* Motivating
* Empowering
* Facilitating
* Supporting

Every mentoring relationship will be different; but all mentoring relationships present the opportunity to learn from each other. The relationship is not intended to provide counselling for mentees or long term support.

What is expected of a mentor?

It is important at the outset to be clear about the time commitment you can make, and how and when mentoring support will be available. We would expect mentors to meet with the student (either face to face or via Skype or Facetime or similar) to agree objectives for the mentoring relationship, the time period over which this will happen, and the support the mentor is able to provide. After this first meeting, we would expect this to be a minimum of a quarterly email exchange. It is important to agree the duration of the relationship with the mentee, and when the mentoring will finish.

We will provide a brief form to complete and return so that we are aware of the mentoring plan.

What is expected of a mentee?

Mentees need to recognise that this support is provided in addition to a ‘day job’, and to value the time provided by the mentor. Keeping appointments, responding promptly and keeping requests for support to the agreed time available are all very important. It is also important to give time to thinking about the sort of help that would be most valuable, and when you would most appreciate input.

Person Specification for Mentors

A mentor should;

• Provide an outside industry-led perspective

• Be a sounding board for ideas

• Facilitate decision-making by suggesting alternatives based on personal experience

• Provide support and encouragement

• Help to action plan

Key attributes and skills

* Thorough understanding of the specified area of work
* An interest in and desire to help talented young people from diverse backgrounds gain experience and access to roles in the Industry
* Listening and questioning skills
* Providing honest and constructive feedback
* Supporting the young person to develop action plans as appropriate

Matching Mentors

The RTS will identify specific mentoring requests, try to match students with mentors in appropriate areas of the Industry, and agree a timeframe and method of initial contact with the mentor and mentee. The industry mentor will then contact the mentee to begin the process.

We will ask both parties to feedback on their experience of the relationship to help us to develop successful future mentoring relationships.

What if it doesn’t work out?

Should either the mentor or the mentee find that the mentoring relationship is not going well, please contact the RTS in the first instance, and we will explore appropriate ways to resolve any problems.

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