Lancaster Career Mentoring Scheme
Connect with the world of work

STUDENT’S GUIDE
Welcome to the Career Mentoring scheme at Lancaster University

The Lancaster Career Mentoring scheme is a career mentoring programme that matches professionals (mentors) with Lancaster University students (mentees). It provides a wonderful opportunity for mentees to gain ‘real-world’ insights, but also for mentors to share their wisdom. The goal of the Mentoring scheme is to give both mentors and mentees the chance to help one another enhance their professional development in areas such as leadership and communication.

“Mentoring is all about enabling people to discover what is within them, nurturing their dreams and focusing their energy, don’t just think this is a one way process as both sides develop together. The biggest buzz I get from my role is enabling talent to thrive through mentoring, becoming part of a mentoring scheme pays back the advantages you have had in your career to help others develop under your wings.”

ADAM OLIVER, HEAD OF CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AT BT
What does the programme actually involve?
The Lancaster Career Mentoring scheme is run by the Centre for Employability Enterprise and Careers (CEEC) and Alumni and Development Office in conjunction with various departments across campus. It is a career mentoring programme that matches industry professionals with Lancaster University students. The programme also aims to:

- Support students in developing the necessary skills to manage their career;
- Provide students with an industry perspective to enhance their academic learning;
- Establish mutually beneficial relationships between industry, the university and its students

Remember, it’s not always what you know, but who you know, so sign up and start networking today!

What is career mentoring?
Career mentoring is one of the most successful ways of helping students link with industry, develop career management skills and prepare for the transition out of university and into the workplace. In simple terms, mentoring is a one-on-one partnership between a more experienced person (the mentor), and someone who is less experienced (the mentee).

The mentor encourages the student mentee to seek advice and information about their career direction and employment goals, whilst the mentor shares the industry skills, experiences and insights and actively takes an interest in the career transition of the student. The relationship is built on mutual respect, encouragement, constructive feedback, openness and a willingness to learn and share.

When does the scheme run?
The scheme runs over the academic year, from November to May.

Who can become involved?
The scheme is open to currently enrolled Lancaster University students who have completed at least one year of study, and industry professionals with a minimum of two years experience in the workplace. Students must be enrolled at Lancaster University for the full year to participate.

How do I become involved?
Applications to become a mentor or a mentee are now open via this website, through this link: http://careers.lancs.ac.uk/mentoring
Being a mentee
- for Lancaster University students

Mentors give you access to ‘real world’ insights from an industry professional who is interested in helping you develop your career. It is important to note that the scheme is not a work experience or paid employment programme. It is a mentoring relationship focused on identifying your career goals, aspirations, and developing your job-seeking skills.

Eligible students
The scheme is available to any student currently enrolled at Lancaster University who has completed at least one year of study. Please note that you must be enrolled for the full academic year to participate. By participating in the scheme you are likely to:

- Develop practical skills and confidence to enter your chosen profession
- Build personal and professional networks
- Increase your understanding of the industry and gain exposure to current professional practises and trends
- Be able to link academic study to industry realities
- Broaden your knowledge of the career options open to you
- Learn what employers are looking for when they hire graduates
- Practise the skills needed to access employment
What makes a good mentee?
The characteristics of a good mentee include:

- Openness to new ideas, suggestions and feedback
- Willingness to have a go and try out different things
- Commitment to self-development and achievement of career goals
- Ability to give and receive constructive and honest feedback
- Skill in good organisation and time management
- Willingness to take the initiative, communicate needs, desires and expectations

Mentor responsibilities

Mentees are expected to:

- Complete the mentoring agreement in conjunction with the mentor
- Agree on a regular, mutually convenient contact schedule
- Advise the mentor if unable to attend scheduled meetings
- Observe confidentiality and personal-professional boundaries
- Be receptive to feedback and suggestions from the mentor
- Explore their own strengths and weaknesses and set relevant goals
- Fulfil commitments as agreed or negotiate changes
- Complete and submit program reports and evaluations by due dates
- Take up opportunities for networking and building professional relationships
- Contact the Employer Co-ordinator if any concerns arise
Mentors and mentees may sometimes struggle to find things to do and topics to discuss. Here are some ideas:

1. Explore and plan career options
   - Discuss the range of career options and pathways in chosen disciplines
   - Visit the mentor’s workplace/discuss different work environments in the industry
   - Discuss the transition from university to work
   - Discuss a list of future personal and professional goals

2. Develop professional networks
   - Discuss skills needed to build relationships and network
   - Attend a professional association meeting
   - Compile a list of contacts the mentee could meet with in your field
   - Arrange for the mentee to meet a recent graduate to gain their perspective on entering the profession
   - Meet with other individuals from the mentor’s organisation or a broader network of professional colleagues
   - Arrange an activity with another professional or organisational member

3. Learn and practise the skills needed to access employment
   - Have your CV, cover letters and selection criteria critiqued
   - Hold a mock job interview and receive constructive feedback
   - Discuss what employers look for in graduate job applicants
   - Attend ‘Shadowing’ opportunities in the workplace
   - Observe in the workplace or at a professional meeting
   - Participate in work activities

4. Develop knowledge
   - Develop a reading list and discuss a few articles at a time, emphasising their practical application and relevance
   - Discuss various management and leadership styles—what works and what does not?
   - Discuss problems emerging in professional or academic contexts and share views on their most effective resolution
"What is talent, well it's that person who makes things happen when you didn't think it was possible. Talent sits within every person, the key is in unlocking it and ensuring it matches an opportunity."

A GRADUATE EMPLOYER
The Lancaster Career Mentoring Scheme is part-funded by the Centre for Employability Enterprise and Careers (CEEC) and the Lancaster University Friends Programme.