

## ALUMNI-STUDENT MENTORING PROGRAMME

### Alumni Mentor Document of Expectations

March 2025

Thank you for your interest in participating in the alumni mentoring scheme; your support is immensely appreciated. Please read through this document before registering your interest on the website form.

This Document of Expectations further explains the programme and lays out your responsibilities as a mentor.

If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Alumni Relations Officer at [alumni@courtauld.ac.uk](mailto:alumni@courtauld.ac.uk)

### KEY GOALS & OBJECTIVES

- a.) To provide student mentees with **direct access to alumni** (this is regularly requested by the student community), together with **practical guidance**, tailor-made career advice, and new contacts in their sector of interest. We anticipate that the one-to-one sessions will also help to increase the students' confidence significantly.
- b.) To attempt to improve **student retention** and provide additional support to students who might be contemplating leaving The Courtauld prematurely before completing their course due to certain barriers to entry (see student eligibility criteria).
- c.) To enhance The Courtauld's community, creating meaningful links between existing students and established alumni.

## PARTICIPANTS

**c. 20-30 Alumni mentors and Student mentees** – individually matched alumni mentors from a wide range of industries, predominantly arts-focused, who have volunteered their services for the programme through the Alumni Relations Officer or website expression of interest form.

Priority will be given to those who have experience working with young people or have mentored in the past. Not all mentors will be matched with a student if they do not match the student's area of interest. They may however be kept in mind for future years.

**Students** – Mainly BA students, however some MA students have been allowed to take part in this year's programme.

**Student Eligibility Criteria:** (students required to tick one or more box, priority given to those who have ticked more than one box)

☐ You joined The Courtauld from a non-fee paying UK school or college.

☐ You are a recipient of The Courtauld bursary.

☐ You are a graduate of The Courtauld Summer School.

☐ You are the first person in your family to participate in higher education.

☐ You are a care leaver.

☐ You are Black, Asian, or from a minority ethnic background.



You have a registered disability.

## FORMAT

- An **ideal minimum of three 45 minute to 1 hour meetings over the course of the Spring Term** (March – end of July). Meetings may be held in person or virtually, taking into account the busy schedules of mentors.
- Once the mentor has been assigned a student, the Alumni Engagement Officer (Alice Sharpe) will set up an introductory email in mid to late March. Once this connection has been made between mentor and mentee, the alumni mentor will be expected to find a suitable date and time for the first virtual meeting.
- Following the initial meeting, the student mentee will be expected to instigate subsequent email or phone correspondence with their mentor for the remainder of the period.
- The role of the mentor is to provide holistic careers support and act as a “sounding board” for any career-related ideas or concerns.
- Mentoring could take the form of careers advice (either specific to the mentor’s sector or more general careers support), CV tailoring, assistance with job/internship applications, improving interview technique, providing insights into the working world, etc.
- If there is any fall-out in communication, please contact the Alumni Engagement Officer at [alumni@courtauld.ac.uk](mailto:alumni@courtauld.ac.uk) in the first instance. It is important for us to keep track of who is engaged properly in the scheme.
- Scheme dates: end March to end July

## PREPARATION/GUIDANCE FOR MENTORS AND MENTEES

- All mentors and mentees will receive a Document of Expectations prior to embarking upon the mentoring scheme, which outlines the expected commitment.

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- Karen Deadfield (Careers Consultant) will hold an informal training/guidance session at the beginning of March for student mentees which will provide a steer on how to make the most of mentoring and provide some key touchpoints to guide the conversations. This will include a survey to understand their expectations from the beginning and similar questions will be asked at the end of the process so we can measure the impact of the mentoring experience.
- Mentors will receive this paper outlining potential conversation routes and what to expect from students. If you have questions about the mentoring process, Karen is happy to answer emails.

## FEEDBACK

Following the mentorship, students and mentors will be asked to complete a feedback survey.

## MENTOR GUIDANCE

Mentoring is designed to support and encourage individuals to manage their own learning, to maximise their potential, develop their skills, improve their performance, and embark on the career pathway they want. It is more 'pull' than 'push', listening and prompting through asking good questions rather than telling them what to do. It is a two-way process where both parties take responsibility to actively engage in.

## MENTORING IS

- **Mutually beneficial** – both the mentor and the mentee gain experiences and skills from taking part in the process.
- **A professional, equitable relationship** – both the mentor and the mentee are equals in the professional mentoring relationship.
- **Led by an experienced individual** – the mentor will typically have more experience in a particular area (e.g. the workplace) than the mentee.
- **Focused on the mentee** – goals for the mentoring should be focused around the needs of the mentee (although the mentee and mentor should agree on the goals together).

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- **Confidential** – mentoring is about building trust, meaning that you and your mentee/s may share information (e.g. about yourselves, your experiences, etc.) that you would want kept private. It's important to discuss and set expectations about what should remain confidential.
- **About developing knowledge and understanding** – this may include your understanding about each other (e.g. your knowledge about work in the field, study skills, or a particular job/industry of interest). This will likely involve providing your mentee/s with constructive and supportive feedback on their skills, professionalism, and achievement of their goals.
- **About sharing ideas and experiences** – it's an opportunity for you and your mentee to discuss your experiences and share ideas for how best to approach their goals or any problems that they may face.
- **About guidance and support** – you will provide your mentee with direction, provide tips, advice or coaching, and support them to develop valuable skills and an understanding of what area they'd like to work in after graduating.

### **MENTORING IS NOT**

- **One-way** – mentoring is not you telling your mentee what to do. You and your mentee have a joint responsibility to engage productively and enjoyably in the process, to ensure you both get as much from the experience as possible.
- **Counselling or therapy** – whilst you may find your mentees share personal information, you can absolutely support them in generating ways to solve any problems they're having. However, mentees should know that you are not trained in counselling or therapy and therefore are not obliged to act as such.
- **Guaranteed work experience** – although it is of course wonderful when these connections lead to further work opportunities for our students, it is not an expectation or guarantee and we make this clear to our mentees in their training.

### **THE FIRST MEETING**

During your first meeting, you will want to get to know your mentee and their reasons for applying. This first meeting is also where you will support them to start setting [SMART goals](#). It's important that you explore together and that the mentee

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understands that they own the process. You are there to listen and to support their learning and development.

Here are some suggested questions you can use to get started:

- Why did you apply for this programme?
- What do you hope to get out of it? OR At the end of this mentoring project, what do you hope will have changed for you?
- What challenges or uncertainties do you face right now? Are there particular skills you want to develop or areas you are interested in?
- Do you have any ideas for careers that interest you? What is it that appeals to you about that?

If you have any further questions, please contact [alumni@courtauld.ac.uk](mailto:alumni@courtauld.ac.uk)

**Thank you**