

COURTAULD

ALUMNI-STUDENT MENTORING PROGRAMME

Alumni Mentor Handbook

2027 Cohort

Welcome

Thank you for your interest in becoming a mentor on the Courtauld Alumni-Student Mentoring Programme.

By sharing your experience, insights and encouragement, you'll play an important role in supporting a current Courtauld student as they prepare for life after graduation.

This document explains how the mentoring programme works, what we ask of you as a mentor and the support available throughout. Please read it before completing the Mentor Expression of Interest Form.

If you have any questions at any stage, please contact the Alumni Engagement Team at alumni@courtauld.ac.uk.

Programme Aims

The Alumni-Student Mentoring Programme aims to:

- connect current students with Courtauld alumni working across a broad range of sectors
- help students build confidence as they prepare for life after the Courtauld
- provide practical careers guidance, professional insight and encouragement
- strengthen connections between alumni and the wider Courtauld community
- support students who may benefit most from additional careers guidance and professional networks

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Who Takes Part?

The programme brings together approximately **20–30 alumni** mentors and **20–30 student** mentees each year.

Mentors come from a wide range of professional backgrounds and volunteer their time to support students.

Students apply to join the programme and places are allocated using an agreed selection process. Priority is given to students who would benefit most from mentoring, using widening participation criteria alongside other factors identified during the application process.

Please note that, although we greatly appreciate every expression of interest, we are not always able to match every volunteer mentor. Matching is based on experience, professional interests and student demand.

Programme Timeline

October–November

- Mentor recruitment
- Mentor Expression of Interest Form opens

October–November

- Student applications
- Student selection process

Late November–December

- Mentor and mentee matching
- Matches confirmed

January

- Optional but highly recommended online Mentor Webinar (recording available)
- Student preparation session
- Introductory email from the Alumni Engagement Team
- First mentor meeting

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February–June

- Ongoing mentoring
- Minimum of two meetings

July

- Final meeting
- Mentor and student feedback surveys
- Programme evaluation

The extended length of this years programme enables a more relaxed mentorship experience for both parties considering busier times during the term ie. Disstertation deadlines.

Preparing for Mentoring

Before the programme begins, mentors will be invited to attend an optional online mentoring webinar, delivered in partnership with the Courtauld Careers Team.

The webinar will cover:

- what to expect from mentoring
- setting expectations with your mentee
- planning productive mentoring conversations
- supporting students effectively
- where to seek support if challenges arise

A recording will be made available for mentors who are unable to attend the live session.

Your Commitment as a Mentor

We ask mentors to:

- commit to a minimum of **three** meetings between January and July (approximately 45–60 minutes each)
- arrange the first meeting following your introduction email
- agree together with your mentee how future meetings will be organised
- encourage your mentee to set realistic goals for the programme

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- provide guidance, encouragement and constructive challenge
- communicate professionally and respond within a reasonable timeframe where possible
- let the Alumni Engagement Team know if your circumstances change

Many mentoring pairs choose to continue their relationship beyond the formal programme. While this is entirely optional, we warmly encourage ongoing connections where appropriate.

Communication and Engagement

Successful mentoring relies upon both mentors and mentees communicating proactively throughout the programme.

We recognise that students may experience particularly busy periods during dissertation submission and examination season (typically April and May), during which communication may occasionally slow.

However, if your mentee becomes consistently unresponsive or disengaged, please contact the Alumni Engagement Team as early as possible.

Where appropriate, we may:

- contact the student
- facilitate a conversation between mentor and mentee
- arrange a rematch where possible
- agree to bring the mentoring relationship to a close

You are **not expected to repeatedly pursue an unresponsive mentee**.

Support Throughout the Programme

The Alumni Engagement Team & Students Union are here to support both mentors and mentees throughout the programme.

Please contact us if:

- communication breaks down
- you're unsure how to approach a situation

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- you have concerns about your mentoring relationship
- your availability changes
- you would simply like advice

We encourage you to contact us early, small issues are often easily resolved with timely support.

Alumni@courtauld.ac.uk

The First Meeting

Your first meeting is an opportunity to get to know one another and establish expectations for the programme.

You may wish to discuss:

- why your mentee applied
- what they hope to achieve
- their current interests and career aspirations
- any challenges or uncertainties they are facing
- goals for the mentoring relationship
- how often you'll meet
- preferred methods of communication

Agreeing expectations early often leads to a more successful mentoring relationship.

Confidentiality

Mentoring relies upon trust and mutual respect.

Discussions between you and your mentee should remain confidential unless:

- someone is at risk of harm
- there is a safeguarding concern
- you feel you need guidance from the Alumni Engagement Team

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If you're ever unsure, please contact us for advice.

At the end of the programme, both mentors and mentees will be invited to complete a short feedback survey.

Your feedback directly informs improvements to future mentoring programmes and helps us provide the best possible experience for future participants. No feedback will ever be shared with other mentors or mentees.

Thank You!

Thank you once again for volunteering your time and expertise.

The generosity of our alumni is one of the Courtauld's greatest strengths and we're incredibly grateful for your support.

We hope you enjoy the experience and find it as rewarding as the students do.