



Aimhigher

West Midlands

Aimhigher Mentoring Handbook

2016/17



Aimhigher Mentoring Handbook 2016/17

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Term Time Address:

University Coordinator Name:

Telephone Number:

Email:

Name of School / College:

School / College Coordinator

Telephone Number

Email:

School / College Address:

Acknowledgement:

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In partnership with:



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Section 1: Introduction

1.1 The purpose of this handbook

This handbook is designed to give you an overview of your role as a mentor and to provide you with the documents and resources you need to carry out your role effectively. The content is divided into sections which focus on key areas and will provide you with a full set of notes from the two day training session.

1.2 What is Aimhigher?

Aimhigher was a National Government initiative to encourage more learners from under-represented groups to achieve their potential to participate in Higher Education. Aimhigher ran across England from 2001 to 2011, and helped thousands of young people by raising their aspirations and improving their attainment.

Despite the loss of Government funding in 2011, Aimhigher has continued in our local area as a partnership of secondary schools, colleges and higher education institutions, plus organisations providing information, advice and guidance on learning and work, along with Local Authorities. The partnership is funded by these partners, and in particular by five higher education institutions:

Aston University
Birmingham City University
University College Birmingham
The University of Birmingham
The University of Worcester.

In addition to the Mentoring Scheme the local partners also work together to offer residential summer schools for learners (UniFest), university taster days and a "single point of contact" service to help schools and colleges find higher education outreach activities for their students.

The Aimhigher Partnership provides opportunities for local learners to explore what higher education might mean for them. Together these activities provide a progressive and integrated programme that gives young people support as they progress through Key Stages 3, 4 and 5. Our aim is to have an impact on learners' aspirations, motivation and exam results, and to give them opportunities to experience higher education at first hand.

1.3 The Aimhigher Mentoring Scheme

The Aimhigher Mentoring Scheme aims to increase participation in higher education amongst young people from lower socio-economic groups and disadvantaged backgrounds who live in areas of relative deprivation or low participation in higher education. Aimhigher has a long history of undergraduate mentoring in West Midland schools and colleges since 2000.

Mentors are undergraduates who provide (mentoring) support and encouragement to learners as they encounter the various transition milestones between year 7 and year 13. You will receive training to help you in this role. Aimhigher plans to place around 130 mentors each year, with the capacity to support over 650 learners.

1.4 Other Aimhigher Activities

The Mentoring Scheme is part of an integrated programme of activities for learners. These include:

- **Masterclasses** - These are subject specific sessions held and organised by a university. Usually a teacher at their school would book spaces on these sessions. For example, if a learner was interested in becoming a forensic scientist then they may be interested to attend a masterclass on this particular subject/course. They would attend an interactive workshop with a lecturer as a taster, for the relevant course. If you think your learners would benefit from attending a masterclass please speak to your university co-ordinator.
- **UniFest Summer Schools** - "UniFest" is the name for University Summer Schools in the West Midlands. It is an opportunity for learners to see what student life is like at one of our universities. UniFest events last for 3 days, and are residential. The events take place towards the end of the summer term and details and application forms are circulated in January. If your learner is interested in attending one of the UniFest Summer Schools then please go to: www.aimhigherwm.ac.uk for more details. Your learners, school or you may be given the UniFest brochure which gives details of all the events in the region. Alternatively speak to your university co-ordinator.
- **Campus visits** - The school may arrange a visit to a university where learners would be given a tour of the campus and/or other sites and accommodation. It is a good opportunity for learners to physically see what a university looks and feels like. Speak to your university co-ordinator if you think your learners would benefit from a campus visit or you would like to show them your own university!
- **Staff Development Events** – Aimhigher arranges a number of conferences and staff development events for schools and colleges each year, to give teachers and careers advisers a chance to update their knowledge of developments in university access, UCAS, student finance and related matters
- **Aimhigher Awards** – Each year Aimhigher celebrates the achievements of mentors and the young people they support. Mentors and school /college staff are asked to nominate learners who have engaged positively and benefitted from the scheme, and university, school and college staff nominate mentors who have "gone the extra mile" to help learners reach their full potential.

To find out more about any of the projects above visit the website: www.aimhigherwm.ac.uk

Section 2: Operational Information

2.1 Mentor support materials and forms

As a mentor you will be supplied with printed and on-line materials to support you in your role. These will include:

- **This Mentor Handbook, which includes a supply of Ground Rules Cards, evaluation and assessment forms and Mentor Session records (section 4.7)**
- **Access to the BrightLinks e-mentoring system**
- **Access to the Aimhigher on-line Learner Engagement Plan and associated resources.**

If you have not received any of the above, or need a replacement at any point, please speak to your university co-ordinator.

The parents or carers of all of your learners will also be asked to complete a **Parent / Learner Information and Consent Form** at the start of your placement. These will be distributed by your host school or college, but you may need to be involved e.g. by reminding learners to ask their parents / carers to sign and return their forms.

2.2 Mentor Timesheets

Your timesheets are an essential part of the Mentoring Scheme. Your university uses them to pay you and monitor the volume and content of engagements with your learners. You must ensure that you complete your timesheet as accurately as possible and submit them on time. Your university will let you know where and when they must be returned. The details on your timesheet give the scheme's co-ordinators an understanding as to what activity goes on within your sessions and an insight into the progress of your learners. If you have any question or difficulties in completing your timesheets, please speak to your university co-ordinator who will advise you and who will supply you with copies of the timesheet.

2.3 Evaluation

Mentors - We are required to evaluate all aspects the scheme. We will be asking you to provide evaluation and feedback at various stages through the scheme and we would be grateful for your support in completing these tasks. Your feedback will enable us to make improvements for mentors/learners working not only this year but for the future of the scheme.

Learners - The experience of your learners is evaluated throughout the scheme, to see if their attitudes/knowledge/aspirations about higher education have changed. The learners are asked to complete pre and post mentoring evaluation forms, and you will be asked to support them with this. The pre-mentoring assessment takes the form of a questionnaire followed by a balance wheel assessment that the learner and mentor do together. This is a valuable opportunity for mentors to work with their learners to identify and agree the main topics or issues where they need help or support. Section 4.3 of this handbook explores this in more detail

2.4 Your learners and the matching process

The success of the relationship with your learners depends to a large extent on appropriate matching. Your university and school/academy/college coordinators have a key role to play in this process and may adopt a range of strategies to match you with your learners.

Matching should ideally take place prior to the initial Launch meeting (section 4.1) but this is not always the case and you may be matched with learners at any time during the year. In addition, mentor/learner profile forms may be used to provide information to aid the matching process. Whatever matching process has been used it is up to you to try and make the relationships with your learners work and to notify your co-ordinators if you feel that you are struggling.

Your learners may have applied themselves to be part of the scheme, or may have been selected by their school or college to take part. Either way, they should be encouraged to feel positive about being selected to take part in the scheme, as it shows that their school believe they have potential to succeed.

Aimhigher learners fulfil one or more of the following criteria:

- Their school / college feel the learner has the potential to benefit from higher education.
- The learner lives in an area of relative deprivation or is eligible for Free School Meals or the 16-19 Bursary
- The learner comes from a family with no parental experience of higher education.
- They live in a home where the highest wage earner is in a semi-skilled, routine or manual occupation or is long-term unemployed.

Learners with disabilities and/or learning difficulties, and young people in the care system are given high priority and do not have to meet any of the above. You can get further guidance on targeting from our website at:

www.aimhigherwm.ac.uk

2.5 Timeline of activity

Month	Activity	Area of Training / Continuing Professional Development (CPD)
March / April	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment campaign in the universities/ briefing sessions 	Module 1: Introduction & Briefing
May / June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applications submitted and shortlisted. • Interviews take place. 	
June / July / August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DBS and employment documentation completed 	
September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two day training programme • Mentors appointed • Matching process commences 	Module 2: Safeguarding/Child Protection Module 3: Mentor Skills & knowledge Module 4: Learner Engagement (1:1 / Group work / Session Planning) Module 5: HEI Organisation & Procedures
October / November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mentors placed in schools/colleges/ academies. • Mentor/Learner engagements commence. 	Module 6: Preparing for launch meetings Planning your first session
December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mentor/Learner engagements continue. 	E-Mentoring / updates / exit strategies
January / February / March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mentor/Learner engagements continue. • Mentor mid- year review. 	Mid Review / top-up training / employability skills review (BCU Mentors)
April / May / June / July	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mentor/learner of the year nominations. • Evaluation of the scheme. • Aimhigher Mentor / Learner of the Year Awards 	Evaluation / reflection / employability skills review (BCU mentors)

*Some schools and colleges prefer to launch later in the academic year, and some mentors may find that they are not able to commence their work until January or even February. In these cases your university coordinator will liaise with their school / college counterparts and keep you informed.

2.6 Types of engagement

As a mentor, you may be required to undertake various methods of engagements with learners:

- **One-to-one** – This is the most likely option for many of our mentors' sessions. This will be where you and one of your learners will meet independently for a face-to-face session in the school or college. More information on one-to-one engagements can be found in section 3.
- **Group work** – The mentors may carry out group sessions with a small group of learners. This can promote beneficial relationships as well as encouraging the learners to share experiences and to learn from discussion. The mentor will be expected to act as a facilitator and to lead the group.

As the relationship with your learners develops it may be appropriate for you to use e-mentoring to back up your face-to-face activity.

- **E-exchanges** – All mentors and learners will have the opportunity to progress to e-mentoring if it is appropriate. This will be through the Bright Links e-mentoring system only. You may use this alongside your one-to-one and group work interventions in order to build the relationship and work through topics online. Don't forget that the University and other people involved in the scheme can access your conversations at any point and that random weekly checks will be carried out to monitor conversations and content. **Please also see Section 3.17 which talks about e-mentoring in more detail.**

2.7 What should happen in your sessions?

As a mentor, it is helpful if you have an understanding of the education system but also how to achieve the goals of a mentor. Your goals can be summarised as follows:

- To support learners to become confident self-starters rather than dependant and reactive
- To create an atmosphere where failure is viewed as a positive learning opportunity, by encouraging your learner to try again if they do not achieve their goals and to reinforce the belief that they will succeed.
- To continuously develop your engagement with the learner, so that by the end of your relationship with them they will have become self-motivated and independent.

During your training you were introduced to the Learner Engagement Plan, which is summarised in section 4 of this handbook and is also available on-line via www.aimhigherwm.ac.uk/mentoring-scheme/generic-resources-and-activities.

The Learner Engagement Plan aims to support you to deliver the objectives of Aimhigher. The aims for a mentor are to raise the knowledge and aspirations of their learners. If you follow the Learner Engagement Plan you should achieve this goal. However, keep your individual learner's needs in mind. Your sessions are NOT designed to push any learner into thinking that they must to go into Higher Education.

Raising aspiration means helping your learner to be the best they can be – no matter what route they may take.

We appreciate that to build a rapport with your learners you will be required to have some sessions or part sessions where you will be soft mentoring e.g. talking over family problems, what was on TV, what they did at the weekend? However, if you find your sessions are frequently moving away from the areas within the Learner Engagement Plan you may want to remind learners of your role as their mentor and review the purpose of your sessions.

Section 3: Training Support Materials

3.1 Introduction

Throughout your time as a mentor you will receive training and Continuous Professional Development (CPD). This section gives you information and notes on the modules of the two day training programme. The training programme is designed to give you the knowledge you need to start mentoring young people, support the development of the skills you will require and help you identify the attitude you need to have in order to become an effective mentor. It is also designed to give you confidence.

This section gives you notes on training that you may wish to refer to during your mentoring and directs you to Learner Engagement Plan material and activities that you can run with your learners. For example the ice-breaker used in your training can be used when you meet your learners for the first time.

To start with here is a reminder of the terminology we use within the Mentoring Scheme

- You, the higher education students, are 'Aimhigher Mentors'
- You are involved in a 'progression mentoring' activity
- You are working with 'learners'
- An 'exchange' is a mentor/learners session which can be either one-to-one, in a group or an electronic exchange via e-mentoring.

3.2 Child Protection

We all have a responsibility to protect children from harm. Everybody involved in the Aimhigher Mentoring Scheme has a statutory duty to safeguard children and promote their welfare.

"Ultimately, effective safeguarding of children can only be achieved by putting children at the centre of the system, and by every individual and agency playing their full part, working together to meet the needs of our most vulnerable children. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

- ***Protecting children from maltreatment***
- ***Preventing impairment of children's health or development***
- ***Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care***
- ***Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes."***

The guidance above is taken from government policy - **HM Government: Working Together to Safeguard Children (March 2013)**

It is important for mentors to have an awareness and understanding of the scheme's policies in this area, which are detailed over the next few pages and were covered in training. It is also important that mentors are aware of their own behaviour and how, in certain circumstances, behaviour can be misinterpreted.

Safeguarding is the responsibility we all have in protecting children from harm.

It does not matter what your role is in this scheme, mentor, teacher or a member of staff from a university.

It is our role to safeguard children.

For mentors there are three practical points to note:

- It is essential to set ground rules at the start of the mentoring relationship
- Confidentiality cannot be maintained in child protection or illegal situations
- If you are unsure or suspect anything – speak to somebody. Your first contact should be the school co-ordinator.

Forms and Classifications of Child Abuse

Neglect

The persistent or severe neglect of a child including failure to protect a child from exposure to any kind of danger or extreme failure to carry out important aspects of care, resulting in significant impairment of the child's health or development. A cluster of indicators may be present.

<p>Indicators of neglect can be physical symptoms such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constant Hunger • Poor personal hygiene - dirty/smelly • Poor state of clothing • Emaciation / weight loss • Untreated medical problems. 	<p>AND /OR</p>	<p>Emotional/behavioural symptoms such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constant tiredness • Late/poor school attendance • Not-attending medical appointments/ treatment • Few friends • Destructive tendencies • Low self-esteem • Neurotic behaviour • Chronic running away • Compulsive stealing • Scavenging for food or clothes • Being left alone or with unsuitable carers.
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Physical Abuse

This is when a child is physically hurt. It can involve hitting, shaking, squeezing, burning and biting. It includes giving a child poisonous substances, inappropriate drugs and alcohol. It can also occur when a parent/carer knowingly fails to protect a child from physical injury or suffering.

<p>Indicators of neglect can be physical symptoms such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bruising • Cigarette burns • Bite marks • Scalds. 	<p>AND /OR</p>	<p>Emotional/behavioural symptoms such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aggression • Absence • Flinching • Withdrawn/watchful • Depression • Fear of other individuals
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Sexual Abuse

Actual or likely sexual exploitation of a child or adolescent. The child may be dependent or emotionally immature or otherwise unable to truly comprehend what is happening or give informed consent. It may include indecent exposure, fondling, masturbation, oral sex, sexual intercourse or exposure to pornography.

<p>Indicators of sexual abuse can be physical symptoms such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pain/bruising in genital areas • Sexually transmitted illnesses • Discomfort • Pregnancy. 	<p>AND /OR</p>	<p>Emotional/behavioural symptoms such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aggression • Absconding • Nightmares or bedwetting • Inappropriate sexual knowledge • Self-harm.
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Emotional Abuse

The actual or likely adverse effect on the child's emotional and behavioural development, caused by persistent or severe emotional ill treatment or rejection. This can be a consistent lack of love or affection, or continual taunting, verbal attacks and shouting.

Indicators of emotional abuse can be physical symptoms such as:

- Failure (including non-organic) to thrive.
- Speech disorders
- Developmental delay.

AND

/OR

Emotional/behavioural symptoms such as:

- Neurotic behaviour
- Self-harm
- Poor play skills
- Fear of making mistakes
- Fear of other individuals

Garbarino, J and Garbarino, AC (1994) described a number of components of emotion abuse including;

- Rejecting:** The abuser refuses to acknowledge a child's worth and legitimacy of a child's needs.
- Isolating:** The abuser cuts the child off from normal social experiences and contact and prevents the child from making friendships – makes the child believe he/she is alone in the world.
- Terrorising:** Abuser verbally assaults the child, creates a climate of fear, bullies and frightens the child – makes the child believe the world is capricious and hostile.
- Ignoring:** The abuser deprives the child of essential stimulation and responsiveness stifling emotional growth and intellectual development.
- Corrupting:** The abuser missocialises the child, stimulating them to engage in destructive anti-social behaviour. Then reinforces that deviance and makes the child unfit for normal social experiences.

Bullying

In a school/college environment the most common type of abuse a mentor may encounter is bullying. A bullied student may be facing threatening behaviour, physical violence, insults or isolation from their peers and this may be taking place inside or outside of the school environment.

Cyber bullying is also an increasing problem, where threatening behaviour towards a young person is facilitated by mobile phones, social networks or online forums. Due to the nature of technology, a child facing online bullies can be under additional duress as unlike face-to-face situations, they are unable to 'hide' from their abusers. It can happen 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Equally, they may be facing abuse from anonymous individuals or even whole groups of people that they have never met.

Any form of bullying behaviour is unacceptable. If your learner discloses to you that they are being bullied in any way or you have a strong suspicion that it may be the case, you must treat the matter seriously and treat it as a disclosure as you would for any other form of abuse (more information on how to deal with disclosures is included later in this section).

Radicalisation and Extremism

Since July 2015 schools and colleges have had a legal duty to protect children from radicalisation (the PREVENT duty). This is similar to their duty to protect children from other harms (e.g. drugs, gangs, neglect and sexual exploitation). Schools and colleges are also expected to build resilience to radicalisation by promoting "British values", encouraging debate and enabling pupils to challenge extremist views

Assessment of an individual engaged with an extremist group, cause or ideology includes some/all of the following indicators:

- Spending increasing time in the company of other suspected extremists
- Changing their style of dress or personal appearance to accord with the group;
- Their day-to-day behaviour becoming increasingly centred around an extremist ideology, group or cause
- Loss of interest in other friends and activities not associated with the extremist ideology, group or cause
- Possession of material or symbols associated with an extremist cause (e.g. the swastika for far right groups)
- Attempts to recruit others to the group/cause/ideology
- Communications with others that suggest identification with a group/cause/ideology.

If your learners disclose anything that gives you cause for concern you should treat it as a safeguarding issue.

Effects of abuse

Abuse in all its forms can affect a child at any age. The effects are so damaging that if untreated it may follow an individual into adulthood. For example, an adult who has been abused as a child may find it difficult or impossible to maintain a stable, trusting relationship, become involved with drugs or prostitution, attempt suicide or even abuse a child in the future.

There have been a number of studies which suggest that certain groups of children/young people are at increased risk of abuse through various factors such as stereotyping, prejudice, discrimination, isolation or a powerlessness to protect themselves/adequately communicate that abuse has occurred - for example, those with learning difficulties or disabilities, from ethnic minorities or who identify as LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or Transgender).

What to look for (BASELINES)

Once you get to know your learner you will recognise what is normal behaviour for them. If this behaviour changes it may be an indication that something is wrong. Below are some examples of body language. You should approach this with caution, as it is not an exact science. For example crossing your arms might not mean you are being defensive – it might mean your neck is aching and this is the most comfortable position to sit in. It is important that you have a basic understanding of body language which may tell you that the learner you are with is under some sort of pressure or stress. However, it is important to know what your learners “baseline” or normal behaviour is, before using body language as a measure. Your baseline is what you normally do; it is when you are behaving in an unusual way that gives an indication that something is wrong.

B	<p>Blinking, Breathing, Blood Vessels Blinking – fast blinking, telling lies? Breathing – breathing can change. Do they have asthma or are they anxious about something? Blushing – are they embarrassed or do they just fancy you? Both of these could be an indication of rising blood pressure.</p>
A	<p>Adaptors Pen clicking, playing with a necklace, playing with hair or earrings. Could mean pressure is building or it might just be something they always do</p>
S	<p>Sweating, Swallowing Swallowing more could mean they are getting nervous about something. Sweating on the upper lip or hands.</p>
E	<p>Eye Contact Very difficult as it can mean many different things. Some people might think that eye contact is for ‘pulling’ the opposite sex yet others may find it sexually threatening. People who are uncomfortable will not make eye contact, but be aware as some cultures avoid eye contact.</p>
L	<p>Leakage Very difficult as it can mean many different things. Some people might think that eye contact is for ‘pulling’ the opposite sex yet others may find it sexually threatening. People who are uncomfortable will not make eye contact, but be aware as some cultures avoid eye contact.</p>
I	<p>Indicators Fidgeting/doodling/not really listening. They may have drifted off and their mind is somewhere else or they might be doing it to block what they don’t want to listen to.</p>
N	<p>Nodding When you bring somebody back from their mental trip out of the room they nod, or say yes, yes, yes after everything you say. Trying to give you the impression that they have been with you all the time. Be warned that some people do this all the time.</p>
E	<p>Expressiveness The blank look that goes with indicators that they are not with you.</p>
S	<p>Space Body space – British people tend to like a metre. People from other cultures can get very close. A reaction that gives a change in space between you and your learner could mean something is wrong. This is why you step backwards if somebody says something you don’t like.</p>

How to deal with a disclosure of abuse from your learner

Although disclosures of abuse are very rare in the history of Aimhigher mentoring, we want all mentors to be prepared. This is general guidance on how you should respond if you feel that a young person is going to disclose something to you:

- React calmly so as not to frighten the learner
- Take what the learner says seriously, recognising the difficulties inherent in interpreting what a learner who has a speech disability and/or differences in language says
- Reassure the learner, but do not make promises of confidentiality, which might not be feasible in the light of subsequent developments
- Keep questions to the absolute minimum to ensure a clear and accurate understanding of what has been said
- Tell the learner that he/she is not to blame and that it was right to tell someone
- Make a full record of what had been said, heard, and/or seen as soon as possible.

Do:	Don't:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be accessible and receptive • Take it seriously • Reassure the child that they are right to tell you • Make careful notes • Get prompt help and assistance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jump to conclusions • Try to force disclosure • Speculate or accuse • Make promises you can't keep • Promise confidentiality • Take a statement.

If you have a disclosure situation, it is important that you make notes. Your notes should:

1. Be purposeful
2. Separate fact and fiction
3. Be assumption free
4. Avoid loaded language
5. Be mindful of an individual right to access to records
6. Use plain English
7. Be accurate
8. Be legible
- 9. Confidential (see below) – BUT DO NOT PROMISE CONFIDENTIALITY.**

As a mentor you are working within a general confidentiality and safeguarding framework. Confidentiality also extends to where you keep your notes including on hard copy or on a memory stick. Keep your notes and information safe and you must always guard against accidental access by people around you such as other learners, family, friends and flatmates. Your information and notes on Learners including personal details and your handbooks should not be shared with anyone outside of the scheme except in the following cases:

- I. A child protection disclosure
- II. A police investigation
- III. If the learner or anyone else is in danger.

Disclosure Notes - National Government Guidance

When making notes relating to any young person or situation, please use the following government guidance and if in doubt contact your university co-ordinator

7 Key Rules	7 Key Questions
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The Data Protection Act is not a barrier to sharing information2. Be open and honest with the person from the outset3. Seek advice if in doubt (can be done without disclosing identity)4. Share with consent where appropriate (and without it if it is in the public interest to do so)5. Consider safety and well-being of the person involved6. Necessary, proportionate, relevant, accurate, timely and secure7. Keep a record of your decision and what you share.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Is there a clear and legitimate purpose for sharing?2. Does the information identify a living person?3. Is it confidential?4. Do you have consent to share?5. If you do not have consent, is there sufficient public interest to share the information?6. Are you sharing appropriately and securely?7. Have you properly recorded the information sharing decision?

'Suspected Abuse' Situations

You have a responsibility to report ANY concern you might have that a learner is being subjected to any form of abuse or if you have been informed of an illegal situation. It is equally your responsibility to report if your learner has not directly made a disclosure but you have reason to suspect an abuse situation, even if you feel you may have got it wrong. It is better to report it and it turn out to be nothing of concern than not report it at all. All staff involved in the scheme will support this approach. If you have a concern you should speak with the school co-ordinator. If this is not appropriate, every school has a designated teacher who has specific responsibilities for the co-ordination of child protection procedures within the school and for liaison with social services and other agencies.

Key Message #1
Always put the wellbeing of young people first and tell somebody!

3.3 Mentoring Behaviour

Mentors should not behave in a manner which would lead any reasonable person to question your suitability to work with children or act as a role-model. If you have any uncertainty whether you are using good practice, seek guidance from your University or school co-ordinator.

Protect yourself

Although it is important to follow Key Message #1, is also important to protect yourself by avoiding any conduct that could be misinterpreted as 'grooming behaviour'. To avoid any possibility of claims of abuse against you, the following notes are provided to give you general guidance.

- Avoid doing anything that is not totally open
- Avoid any favouritism and make sure you treat all learners the same way
- Avoid making unnecessary physical contact with any student

- If you are in a situation where contact is unavoidable / impractical, ensure that you have the learner's consent and explain clearly what you are doing while you are assisting them. Do this openly and in sight of other participants
- Avoid making contact with any student's genitalia and in the case of girls their chest as well.
- Do not make any sexually suggestive comments to any learners
- Do not engage in rough physical or provocative games or play with any learners
- If physical contact is inevitable it is essential that participants consent to the methods of lifting, carrying and contact that will take place

If the learner becomes unwell either take them to reception or attract the attention of a teacher immediately. Don't try and deal with it yourself. All schools have qualified First Aiders and when you first arrive in the school ensure you know what the procedure is to contact them in an emergency.

Appropriate mentoring behaviour

In addition to the points made previously, you may want to consider your approach carefully within certain areas of the scheme. The following guidance can be helpful if you are unsure of how to react to a specific scenario. Remember if you are ever uncertain about how to deal with any situation you can contact either your school or university co-ordinator - it is their role to assist you!

Dress and Appearance

- Is appropriate to their role as a mentor in a school/college environment
- Is not likely to be viewed as offensive, revealing or sexually provocative
- Does not distract, cause embarrassment or give rise to misunderstanding
- Is absent of any political or otherwise contentious slogans
- Is not considered to be discriminatory and is culturally sensitive.

Gifts

- The scheme does not accommodate the giving of gifts, however if you feel a gift is appropriate (For example educational support materials) please speak to the university co-ordinator in the first instance. Do not show any favouritism towards any of your learners
- Ensure that any gifts **given or received**, particularly in situations which may be misconstrued, are declared to the school/university co-ordinator.

Infatuations

- Occasionally a learner may develop an infatuation with a mentor. You should deal with these situations sensitively and appropriately to maintain the dignity and safety of all concerned
- Be aware that infatuations carry a high risk of words/actions being misinterpreted and therefore you should make every effort to ensure that your own behaviour is above reproach at all times
- If aware of a developing infatuation, mentors should at the earliest opportunity contact the school co-ordinator so that appropriate action can be taken to avoid any hurt, distress or embarrassment
- Mentors should accurately report and record any incidents or indications that suggest a learner may have developed an infatuation
- If a learner makes approaches to you, or is overly familiar (verbally, physically or in written communication) you should remove yourself from the situation and report the matter to the school co-ordinator as soon as possible, also inform your university co-ordinator
- Mentors should always acknowledge and maintain professional boundaries.

Out of school activity

- No child or young person should be invited into the mentor's home. There should be no contact with the learner's family unless agreed beforehand
- Mentors should not make arrangements to meet with their learners outside of the school setting. The exception to this rule is, if a development in the mentoring relationship takes it to a different location. This requires the consent and agreement of the school, university co-ordinator and the learner's parents
- All activities need to be open and disclosed to prevent any misinterpretation.

Communication with learners

- Mentors must not give their personal contact details to learners, including their mobile telephone number and email addresses this includes instant messaging (see below). Contact with your learners should only be during mentoring sessions or through the Bright Links e-mentoring system. Any other form of communication is not acceptable
- Mentors must not take pictures or videos of their learners or other students
- Only make contact with learners for professional reasons and in accordance with the scheme's policy
- The only acceptable and permissible mode of communication, outside of the mentoring / e-mentoring sessions is through the school / college or university co-ordinator.

Social Networking Sites

- Under **NO CIRCUMSTANCE** allow your learners to connect with you online outside of Brightlinks. If they try to add/follow you, decline and then discuss in your face-to-face meetings why this is not possible / appropriate within the scheme
- Be aware that information that you may put onto social networking sites which often can include pictures are going into the public domain
- Set your own privacy levels at the highest possible
- Consider whether profile pictures of a "good night out" may send out the wrong messages about your suitability to work with children, to the people you are working with and their families
- Please be aware that policies adopted by most social networking sites are designed to protect the site owners rather than the user
- **Remember that future employers may look at the same information.**

Key Message #2

Be completely open in everything you do. Always ensuring somebody else knows where you are and what you are doing and never hesitate to gain approval for any activity you are planning especially if it is different to what you do week in, week out with your learners.

Other people's behaviour

If during your involvement in the mentoring scheme, you are concerned about or made to feel uncomfortable by the behaviour of those around you, then please speak to your university co-ordinator or as an alternative you can speak to a member of the Aimhigher Co-ordination Team. If you are uncertain as to whether you are using good practice, are unsure about anything in this section or feel that you do not understand any part of it - seek guidance from your university co-ordinator or your School / College Co-ordinator.



3.4 Code of Conduct for Mentors

You are expected to demonstrate good conduct and integrity in your work as an Aimhigher mentor, for your protection and that of the learners you support. Our expectations of you are detailed in the training, resources and support we provide, and are summarised in this Code of Conduct, which Aimhigher mentors are required to sign before they commence work with young people. Please speak to your university co-ordinator if you have any questions or need further clarification.

Safeguarding & Confidentiality

- I have attended Aimhigher Mentor training and understand the information given to me, including the specified safeguarding training and requirements
- I understand that there may be situations where I may be legally required to report a situation (such as any child protection or illegality concerns)
- I understand that mentoring sessions should always take place within my host schools and colleges, in locations that are fully observable by school and college staff
- I **WILL NOT** release personal details to learners or any other student within the school/college, (including my address, email addresses, phone/mobile number or social media accounts).

Equal Opportunities and Anti-Racism

- I will demonstrate a commitment to equalities by engaging in honest discussions with the young people involved about discrimination and other relevant issues.

Commitment and Reliability

- I will endeavour to be a good role-model to the young people
- I commit to delivering between 12 and 15 face-to-face sessions, wherever possible on a weekly basis, and to attend sessions on time
- I will inform **BOTH** the school and my university co-ordinator as soon as feasibly possible if I am unable to attend a mentoring session for any reason
- I will inform my university co-ordinator if a learner drops out of the scheme or if there are any changes in learner details (name changes etc.)
- I will inform my university co-ordinator of any changes in my mentoring hours
- If delivering my mentoring commitment becomes difficult I will contact my university co-ordinator before taking any action, and will endeavour to arrange a final session with my learner/s to explain why I cannot continue

Administration of scheme

- I will record Learner and Mentor absences on my timesheets.
- I will get my timesheets signed by the school co-ordinator or alternative contact at the end of each mentoring visit
- I will submit payment forms and signed timesheet **on time**
- I realise that failure to return forms on time will result in loss of or delayed payment
- I will support the evaluation of the mentoring scheme.

Signed: Print:

Date:

3.5 Ground Rules

This section on ground rules follows on from child protection as now you should have an understanding as to why ground rules are so important. It is about protecting you and your learners during your sessions and relationship. It is essential that you discuss with your learners the ground rules that you are going to share and put in place as a set of boundaries for how you are going to take your sessions forward together. There is a section later in the handbook where you can work with your learners to come up with a set of rules for your sessions. You should have enough space for each learner but also for separate group session rules.

It is essential that you familiarise yourself with the ground rules process before your first session so that you are prepared. **Don't forget there are two ground rules that you must include and these are identified for you on the Ground Rules Cards (section 6.4).** These rules relate to disclosures, confidentiality and sharing personal details. Make sure that you talk through these rules, explaining them fully so that the learner understands why they are necessary. This will help the learner to take ownership of their ground rules rather than feeling they have been imposed upon them.

You will develop your remaining ground rules together but here are some examples you may like to think about or suggest with your learner:

- Honesty between each other
- What will we call each other?
- What happens/what do you need to do, if either of you are unable to attend the session?
- Timekeeping / punctuality and who is going to be responsible for keeping an eye on the clock?
- Mobile phone and MP3/iPod etiquette
- Use of language and how will we speak to each other
- What equipment are we going to bring – logbooks, pens, paper etc?
- How are we going to show respect for each other?
- If one of us is not happy about something, let's agree to discuss it
- When in a group how are we going to ensure everybody has a say and how are we going to show respect for what they say?

Ground rules are not set in stone and you may feel the need to re-visit them at various times during the scheme, particularly if either you or your learners feel they are not working for both of you.

3.6 Mentoring skills – Knowledge, Skills & Attitude (KSA)

For any task you need three things: knowledge, skills and attitude. Being a mentor is no different and by looking at what sort of knowledge you need, what skills you require and what attitude makes a good mentor you can decide yourself where your strengths are and where you may have some areas that you need to strengthen.

One of the most important things to remember is that attitude is probably the area that you need to concentrate on the least. Through the application stages to become a mentor you have needed to demonstrate that you already have the right attitude, otherwise the co-ordinating team at your university would not have let you get this far. Here are some examples of the knowledge, skills and attitude required of a good mentor. See how many of them you can identify in yourself.

Knowledge	Skills	Attitude
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know your subject • Understand the role of a mentor • Know the system and structure of mentoring • How to manage the paperwork • How to deal with different situations • Knowledge of your audience. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listening • Questioning • Communication • Confidence • Clear in delivery • Engaging • Able to be interactive • Manipulating through process • Time management • Creative thinking • Leadership qualities • Team & group working • Facilitating. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive • Professional • Friendly • Approachable • Flexible and open • Prepared • Honest • Natural and with belief • Enthusiastic, persistent and willing • Encouraging • Non-judgemental • Personally commitment • Sensitive & respectful of individual preference.

Using KSA with your learners

Understanding your own KSAs is vital, but you can also use KSAs to support your learners. In any situation where you have somebody who is failing or unable to complete a task a good way to look at it is to ask what level of knowledge, skills and attitude do they need to complete it. By breaking it down into these three areas it is easier to identify where you need to put some in support, development or training. Different tasks will require different levels of the three areas. However, you need to be aware that whilst knowledge and skills can be improved, attitude is more difficult to change as it is part of an individual's personality and character. But this is probably an area that you will have to tackle with your learner(s). For example if they have a particular attitude to their studies that is preventing them progressing, the way to remove that barrier to progression is to change their attitude. This is explored more in section 4.1

3.7 Communication

Communication is a vital set of skills, on which the success of the relationship with your learners will depend. There are as many definitions of communication as there are opportunities to communicate. We believe that for our mentors to be successful the learners should feel as if they have been communicated with rather than communicated at.

Good communication skills are the key to successful mentoring because it is the mentor who will take the lead and you are going to have to work hard at it. Do not expect to walk through the door and your learner to say, "thank goodness you are here". You are also going to have to take into consideration how long you are spending with each learner or group. The time that you spend with them needs to be full of communication of some sort.

Verbal – words: The way we say things can give different meanings and therefore we need to be very careful. Therefore it is essential to think about not only what we say but how we say it.

Non-verbal: Non-verbal is actually more important as it gives out many different messages and we can communicate with each other without saying anything. For example, the tone of what we say gives clues to the type of response we are expecting e.g. a questioning statement.

Types of non-verbal communication include;

Written Communication: Can be very formal and therefore difficult to misinterpret what is being communicated. However, there are methods of written communication that can be dangerous because there is no supporting meaning behind it and it can be taken the wrong way. Text and e-mail are perfect examples of this

Body Language: Someone's body language can have a significant impact on how we think they are receiving what we say and how we can respond to them. Body language can be the first thing a learner judges about their mentor and can set the tone for any interaction.

Gesture: Gestures are used a great deal between people who know each other well and there is no requirement for the words to a message to be understood. There are lots of gestures that have universal understanding.

Activity

"Your communication style" quiz is available on the Aimhigher resources website

www.aimhigherwm.ac.uk/mentoring-scheme/generic-resources-and-activities

Communication as a Weapon

Within a mentoring context communication must never be used to intimidate, ignore or ridicule. There is one main purpose as to why communication is used as a weapon - and that is for control. Take a few moments to think about occasions where communication has been used as a weapon against you. How did it make you feel?

You need to think about how you communicate messages in all aspects of the mentoring process and be aware of any factors which may affect the learners understanding of what you have said. There is no such thing as good or bad communication; but is the communication fit for the purpose?

3.8 Active Listening

It is important for mentors to be active listeners. Be aware of the importance of body language and that sometimes people can give the impression they are not listening when they are. A study from Argyle stated that the following gives an indication of the level of impact on active listening skills; words 8%, tone 37% and body language 55%. Therefore your learners may give you the impression they are not interested in what you are saying but do not assume they are not listening. It is vital that you listen to the answer before you ask the next question. If you give the impression that you are not listening, your learners will think you are not interested in what they have to say.

You should try to improve your listening skills and the following gives you some advice on how to help you achieve this. Demonstrating good listening skills through any of the following will help a learner recognise that they are being heard.

Physical Approach	Mental Approach:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Be relaxed• Keep reasonably still• Face the speaker• Look interested• Maintain eye contact.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Keep an open mind• Concentrate• Don't interrupt• Listen to tone as well as content• Ask questions on any areas of difficulty or confusion.

Active listening is a skill; we can learn it, even if we are not very good at it to start with. When we practice this skill, we are trying to act as a “mirror” for the person who is speaking. This is why it is sometimes referred to as “reflective listening”. We reflect back, in our own words, what the person has said and also the feelings being expressed. This helps the conversation move forward.

3.9 Questioning Skills

A key mentoring skill is the ability to ask the right type of question, all types are usually good in the right situations and if they are fit for purpose. You would need to use the right type of question with your learners. Here are some examples of different types of questions

Open:	These questions allow you to gather information and allow your learners to open up and talk more freely. Open questions generally begin with what, why, when, how, where. For example “what progress have you made with research for your history coursework” or “which aspects of school do you like the most?”
Closed:	These tend to invite only yes, no or very short answers but can be acceptable in certain situations. For example “have you used this computer programme before?” It is recommended that closed questions are used sparingly.
Probing:	Open questions encourage full responses and probing questions, will allow you to explore and clarify further. This will help learners identify experiences and clarify important issues which can help you obtain a better understanding of the situation. For example “you say you feel like dropping history - what would help you to consider not dropping it?”
Summary:	These questions help you to check your understanding of what your learner is saying or to clarify information already given. For example “as I understand it” or “so you are going to”. This lets the learner know they are being listened to and understood, and gives them an opportunity to correct any assumptions that may have been made
Reflective:	This type of question can to be used to get the learner to reflect on an issue or to express an opinion on something. “How do you feel about” or “what are your views on?”
Hypothetical:	These questions are used to encourage the learners to think more widely and are particularly useful to get them to consider a range of alternatives, for example “what would you do if”, or “what happens if”. Again, like closed questions, try to use hypothetical questions sparingly.

All question types are good in the right situation and if they are fit for purpose. General guidance is that you should not ask a question if you do not want an answer and when an answer is given, listen to it. Do not prepare the next question while listening to the answer to the last one. Questions should build. Never assume that your learners have understood everything you have communicated to them. Use questions to check their understanding.

3.10 Learning Styles

Most people have a preferred learning style and perceive information differently. As a mentor it is important for you to be aware of your own learning style and that of your learners. Research shows that learners are most effective when they are taught or mentored in their personal learning style.

There are many tests available to help you and your learners discover your preferred learning style, one of which is detailed below. It is useful to know about learning styles as they influence mentoring relationships and the way mentors and learners communicate and work together. This awareness will also enable you to understand your learner's actions and motivations more clearly and help you to decide the most appropriate mentoring approaches to take. The table below provides some examples of how learning styles (e.g. Reflector/Activist) may impact on mentor and learner interaction.

Example of the effects learning styles may have on mentoring

In the 1980s, leading theorists Peter Honey and Alan Mumford identified four key learning styles:

- **Activists** enjoy energetic activities and will try anything once
- **Reflectors** like to stand back and think about a situation before making any decision
- **Theorists** are rational, logical and analytical
- **Pragmatists** like the common sense approach and are 'to the point'. The following table provides some examples of how different learning styles (in this case reflector vs. activist) may impact on mentor and learner interactions in many different ways.

	Reflector Mentor ↓	Activist Mentor ↓
Reflector Learner →	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Both may take time to come up with ideas to overcome challenges • Both may be cautious and fearful of trying new things • Each may want the other to take the lead • May get bogged down with too much need for information • May experience problems meeting deadlines • Progression may be slow • Difficulties in being in the limelight and making decisions in the amount of time allocated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learner may want to take things more slowly and think things through whereas the mentor may want a faster pace • Mentor may not give learner enough detailed information to make decisions • Mentor may not see much change in their learner's behaviour week-to-week • Learner may leave decisions to the mentor and not engage or be actively involved in the relationship
Activist Learner →	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mentor may want to take things slowly but learner wants things to move quicker • Learner may not want to review/evaluate their progress regularly • Learner may get fed up/bored with a topic before the mentor feels ready to move on • Mentor may be reluctant to give ideas unless they are realistic and well thought out • Learner may not take on board ideas from mentor • Learner may seek to take over the relationship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Both may want to take the lead and be the centre of attention; this may take focus away from learner's needs • Both may not think things through and take unnecessary risks • Both may get bored with the relationship if they don't see immediate results • There may be a conflict of ideas and inability to agree on solutions • Both may overlook the small details, long term goals and objectives

3.11 Barriers to Communication

There can be a number of factors that hinder good communication and it is up to the mentor to remove them if they arise during your mentoring sessions. Here are some that you may come across:

Assumption	The assumption that you know what they are going to say or assume that what they say is worthless. You need to break down a barrier within the learner who could believe older people think that they have nothing of value to say. You want them to believe that you are interested in what they are saying and welcome their views and thoughts.
Prejudice & Bias	<p>These are blockages to listening and we all have them. Pointless prejudices such as on the basis of race or religion etc. have no place in the Mentoring Scheme. But there are others that are our own and personal to us and we often don't know where these prejudices come from but we pick them up and they are all around us. Sometimes parents give them to us. An example of this could be when a male child cries his mother says "big boys don't cry". When that child is grown up and sees a man cry he may have the attitude that the person could not be a real man because he is crying.</p> <p>Look at your own prejudices and be aware of them. You might walk into a room and spark a prejudice. It could be because of how you are dressed, the sound of your voice or just the look of you. Any little thing like this could cause a barrier between you and your learners. If you become aware of this in your learners, don't be frightened to challenge it and question why they think like that.</p>
Environment	<p>Noise, too hot or too cold. You can manipulate the environment to make people feel either more comfortable or very uncomfortable. The environment is a resource. For example a difficult meeting in an office where the manager makes sure the employee is sitting on a lower chair to deliberately make them feel talked down to.</p> <p>When working with your learners be aware of the environment you are both in. Obviously you have to work within the area that the school or college have given you and it might not be ideal, but is there anything you could do to make that environment more comfortable? For example, think about how you might sit at a desk with your learner, rather than sitting directly opposite each other (like a formal interview) would your learner perhaps feel more comfortable sitting alongside you or at a 45° angle around the corner of a desk?</p>
Different personalities	It might be that they just don't like you. It happens to all of us. We all go through life meeting people that we just don't like. Your learner might not like you. You could walk through the door and their reaction might be "I don't like that one get me another one". If you do get this extreme and very rare response, don't forget that your university co-ordinator understands. Sometimes it just will not work and you will have to let go and move on. If you find yourself in this situation, talk to your university co-ordinator who will deal with the situation for you. If one of your learners persistently fails to attend, ask the school, college or academy co-ordinator to replace them with another learner and speak to your university co-ordinator.

Don't forget that your learners have every right to an opinion that might be opposite to yours. That is not a reason to say "we don't get on", just agree to differ and get on with it.

3.12 Barriers to Learning

As well as barriers to communication with your learners you may also come across barriers to their progression and learning. This is what Aimhigher activity is all about; helping young people remove barriers to their own progression through education and therefore giving them every opportunity to achieve their potential.

Related Activity: 'The Consequences Matrix' available from www.aimhigherwm.ac.uk/mentoring-scheme/generic-resources-and-activities

Here are some barriers you may come across which all need very careful handling:

Previous negative experience

These are things that happen to us when we are young that condition us as to how we think about ourselves and our own abilities. The following are some examples:

A young person may say **"I'm no good"**, because they feel they are not learning as much as the people around them. What this can actually mean is that the young person is unable to learn as the methods used may not be appropriate for them. We know for example that boys and girls learn differently.

Another phrase a young person might come up with is **"this is not for people like me"**. This raises issues around their own feelings about where they do and don't belong. But where have those feelings come from? Has somebody else told them they don't belong and they have believed it? Wherever this has come from it is a real feeling/view that needs to be addressed.

Other people can give you a label. An example of this could be a teacher that says **"your brother was a nuisance so you must be too"**.

Bullying may be playing a part in the way a young person thinks about themselves. We all know that some children can make life miserable for others. Any label can act as a barrier. Another is the child believing they are from the poorest family. This young person has enormous barriers to overcome and eventually that young person can start to use the label as an excuse – "ah well, I'm from a poor family you know". The message here is, therefore you cannot expect me to perform.

Family/Home

"Blame the parents" – this is something we often hear today. Mentors must be careful as in some cases it is that parents cannot support rather than will not support.

Academically they just may not be able to keep up with their children. It is also very difficult for parents to accept that their children are in some way **"better"** than them. Some parents may make excuses. For example **"I need the table you will have to put that away"**, referring to their homework.

Of course there are parents who will not want to bother but do not assume that is always the case. Sibling pressure can also play a part in this. Mentors can be a resource to help deal with this situation, often by just questioning where these views have come from and then setting out on a journey with the learners to prove them wrong.

Conditioned Response

Believing **"I can't do it"** because everybody has told them so or because they may have been ridiculed for being different. Therefore the child stops trying to have a go, instead choosing to accept that it is impossible. This is called learned helplessness.

Mentors can turn this around by creating an environment where they are able to say – **"have a go – it does not matter if you get it wrong. It is better to get it wrong than not try at all"**. However, as with everything else be careful with this. If it is hopeless don't say it is good. Don't keep going with it if you can see it is hopeless. Break it down and work on and concentrate more on the positive aspects.

Encourage and use positive stroking. The warning is do not praise if it is wrong – help them get it right but praise the effort.

Disorganisation
Disorganisation in learners can cause stress, confusion and lead to a decrease in motivation. Mentors can help their learners in becoming more organised. Target setting can be used as a tool to develop organisational skills. Mentors can also use their own experiences as a student to help their learners to deal with study workloads and help them to develop organisational skills which will be required for further studies and employment.
Not getting along with teachers
Not getting along with a teacher can lead to a decrease in motivation and interest in a subject. Mentors need to be careful in this area and not get caught in a drama triangle (i.e. fighting battles on behalf of their learners – see 3.13). Teachers can often be the barrier to progression/learning but there are always two sides to a story! Mentors should be very tactful and liaise with their university co-ordinator on this matter before proceeding.
Peer pressure
Peer pressure amongst pupils and friends is a common experience for learners at secondary school age. This needs to be dealt with very carefully. Mentors can support learners to develop self-confidence and awareness and therefore make choices that are right for them and not be influenced by pressures from their peers.
Behaviour
One of the greatest barriers to progression/learning is behaviour. Mentors should be aware of this fact and remember that their Learners may often demonstrate inappropriate behaviour. Setting mutually agreed ground rules will help to manage any unwanted behaviour. Mentors can also work closely with staff within the school to help support any behaviour management initiatives that their learners may be involved in.

3.13 Rackets (or encouraging positive thinking)

Rackets are very powerful in confirming beliefs we have about ourselves. Understanding them will help you to understand your learners. Rackets can be described as when a young person has an unreasonable belief about themselves and their interaction with others. Examples of rackets can include;

- No other pupils like them,
- They will not pass their exams,
- Can't get on with a teacher,
- HE is not for people like them,
- They are no good with computers/coursework/history....

They are usually formed by a previous negative experience which leads to an unwillingness to accept that they can deal with a particular situation. It is your role to help break the racket and help give learners the confidence to tackle these issues themselves.

The interaction that you have with learners during your sessions can be described as an exchange of strokes. Using positive strokes will invite the learners to feel okay about themselves and others. Therefore to break down a racket you will need to consider positive stroking. This can be done by encouraging the learners to "have a go" with you providing the necessary support. Don't forget using the right type of questions are also strokes. Paying attention to learners by asking for their opinions, concerns, ideas or their latest news are powerful ways of recognising them as a person and breaking down rackets.

Researching an area of interest for the learners is also positive stroking as they will appreciate the time and effort and the individual attention which is given to them. Again this is an effective way of building up their confidence. You could use a reflective activity such as a self-assessment (**available from www.aimhigherwm.ac.uk/mentoring-scheme/generic-resources-and-activities**) to discuss with learners, what about themselves? Can they identify what they would like to develop so that their perception could change? Discuss how changes might improve their achievement levels. Setting realistic and achievable short term targets can also be used to help achieve these outcomes

3.14 Mentor Commitment

Just for a moment put yourself in the position of one of your learners:

Your teacher has told you that you are going to get an Aimhigher Mentor to help you achieve your potential. A letter has gone home to your parents saying that you have been selected for the opportunity and they have agreed to let you take part. You meet your mentor for the first time at the launch of the scheme. Your mentor is great, you really get on and they talk to you in an understanding and caring way. You feel that they are really interested in helping you. They make arrangements for your session next week and you are actually looking forward to it.

The session comes, you turn up early and you wait but your mentor never arrives and eventually you get a message to say they are not taking part in the scheme any more.

Can you imagine the devastating effect this scenario can have on the learner? You have given the impression that you are not interested enough to continue the relationship. All of the barriers that have been preventing the learner from progressing have just been re-enforced by your actions. Don't do it! Once you have met your learners you should consider yourself well and truly committed.

3.15 The Mentor/Learner Lifecycle and Exit Strategies

Every mentoring journey is composed of specific 'phases' (Zachary 2002)*. The relationship between a mentor and learner consists of 5 phases. Each phase builds on from the previous one and will vary in length from one learner to another. The following table provides an insight into how the closure of the mentoring relationship is embedded into the 'The Mentor/Learner Lifecycle'.

Phase 1 Preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Briefings, recruitment and training • Launches in schools, colleges and academies • Matching and introduction to learners
Phase 2 Establishing rapport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting your learners and building rapport • Establishing ground rules and introducing your log book • Completing initial paperwork (e.g. learner pre-mentoring evaluation)
Phase 3 Diagnosis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying problems, issues and concerns • Negotiating mutually agreed goals and targets for your learners
Phase 4 Working towards goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working together to achieve goals and regularly reviewing progress • Acknowledging milestones and celebrating successes • Empowering learners to take responsibility and preparing for closure
Phase 5 Closure & exit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achieving goals and bringing relationship to a close • Reflecting on experiences • Completing end of year evaluations forms

*Zachary, L (2002) The Mentor's Guide: Facilitating Effective Learning Relationships. New Jersey: Jossey Bass.

Exit Strategies

The closure phase of the mentoring relationship is as important as the start but may often be the most difficult as close personal ties may have formed over the academic year. You should inform your learners about the closure/end of your mentoring support from the outset and discuss this during all phases. This is important as it will frame the relationship, avoid dependency and prepare the learners for the eventual ending of your developmental journey together. If you and your learners have set realistic goals and have worked towards them steadily, then ending becomes an obvious and natural process.

Agree and set the date of your last session with your school and university co-ordinators well in advance, so they are able to support you in this process. Under **NO** circumstances should you stop mentoring without first discussing it with your learners and co-ordinators. This can cause a lot of damage (see section 3.14) and will undo the hard work you have achieved so far.

Structure your final weeks to focus on long-term target setting and reviewing the accomplishments your learner has made as part of the scheme. Importantly, you should seek to empower your learners so they are able to continue the developmental journey independently, and with confidence, once you have gone.

Remember - You will also need to collect End of Scheme Evaluations from each of your learners. Start doing this 2-3 weeks before your final week, as this will leave your last session free for something more fun. For example, you may wish to plan some games or quizzes!

3.16 Models of Engagement: One-to-One and Group Work

Every aspect of the training programme and this handbook, whether about the knowledge and skills required to be a mentor or if it has been about the attitude required to be an effective mentor, can be applied to both one-to-one and group sessions.

The Differences between One-to-One and Group Work

One-to-one sessions can seem daunting but the aim is for both the mentor and learner to contribute equally to the session. Some learners can really benefit from one-to-one interaction as the time is centred on their individual needs and interests. The mentor can lead the sessions but should ensure that they are not doing work for the learner.

Here are some examples of the challenges of **one-to-one exchanges**:

- Your learner seems uninterested in the topics you are discussing
- Your learner wants to bring their friends along to the sessions
- Your learner is more interested in talking about relationship problems etc., rather than what you have got planned
- Your learner is persistently late or does not show up for their session
- You haven't got an appropriate place to meet in the school.

Overcoming challenges of one-to-one work

- Discuss your learner's needs – It is very important that you know exactly what the learner wants from the sessions. Work together to agree on a list of priority areas to cover in your sessions and plan them in advance so that your learner can be prepared (i.e. 'next week we will be looking at UCAS applications')
- Agree clear Ground Rules at the beginning of your placement
- Discuss your reasons – talk openly to your learner about the mentoring scheme's aims and how you expect the work you are doing together will support them. Encourage your learner to ask questions if they do not understand why you are covering a certain topic.

- Use icebreakers to get to know your learner initially but if you are still finding they are quiet in your sessions then chatting to them about 'non-mentoring' subjects can be a way to start the conversation flowing. Use the beginning of each session to ask about their week / talk about your week before you start on the actual content of the session. Take a note of things they are doing during the week so you remember to ask them about it the following week!
- Be very flexible – be ready to change what you were planning if your learner asks you to.
- Keep trying different types of activities – games, creative work, listening and reading. Use pcs sometimes if possible?
- Regularly give feedback to your learner. Praise anything they have done well (big or small) and identify areas that need further work/improvement
- Use your active listening skills!

Within group work the mentor will need to lead the group as a facilitator and you will need to ensure that each member of the group has an equal opportunity to participate. Group work can give mutual support to all participants but can also give more challenges.

Here are some examples of the challenges of **group exchanges**:

- A dominating member of the group taking over
- A reluctant member not taking part
- Members of the group not listening to each other and/or talking over each other
- Lack of group interaction and poor group dynamics
- Avoidance of disagreement or difficult issues
- Setting and achieving individual learning goals which link to those of the group itself.

Overcoming challenges of group work

- Set clear Ground Rules for any group work you do
- Take a stress ball (or other soft object) and throw it around the group – people only speak when they're holding the ball
- Try a range of group working methods and techniques to see which work best
- Arrange a session where you all use PCs
- Ask each learner to give a presentation on a subject of their choice and present to the group
- Introduce the idea of active listening encourage your group try and use this. Use some of the activities we've used in training.

Group working methods

The idea of working with a group of young people can be a daunting feat for some mentors. However here are some ideas of how you can get your learners to work together in different ways.

Task-based	The mentor sets a task for the group to research, divide the group into pairs or between individuals and they then report their findings to the rest of the group and discuss. (Variation: Divide the group into two teams to complete the same task in a limited amount of time.)
Discussion method	Mentor brings a topic to the attention of the group and the learners are encouraged to ask questions as well as contribute their experiences and knowledge. Learners are encouraged to input as much as possible.
Seminar-style	One learner is asked or volunteers to make a short presentation on a topic they have agreed to investigate during the week before your meeting. After their presentation other learners have to ask questions. Variation: two learners work together on the research and presentation.

Debate	Express the topic in the form of a debate, e.g. 'This House believes that going to university is a waste of time and money'. Three learners prepare the case for the motion and three for the case against. Hold a debate as the whole group.
Pair work	Divide the group into three pairs of A's and B's. A then has three minutes to persuade B to do something (e.g. convince B that university is their best option). Then they swap around and B had to convince A (e.g. to attend a university away from their home town to broaden their experience).
Snowball	Divide learners into two groups of three or three groups of two to work on a task, and then bring the groups together to pool their findings or for a general discussion.
Goldfish bowl	Invite two learners to act out a situation while the others observe.
Priorities exercise	Present learners with a list of options (e.g. types of university, features that they would want in their ideal university). Ask them to put the items in rank order individually. Then they form pairs to see if they can agree a top three list of desired features. Finally the groups comes together to agree a top three list (if they can).
Triad role plays	Two learners act as characters in a role play (e.g. admissions tutor and applicant) while the third acts as an observer. Then they swap around roles so that each has a turn as interviewer, interviewee and observer.

The Learner Engagement Plan (section 4) is an excellent source of information and ideas for group working sessions. If you are having problems, talk to your university co-ordinator. **You may be a little nervous about running session but be yourself...your learners are probably more nervous than you!**

3.17 E-mentoring (Bright Links)

Bright Links is the name of the e-mentoring system used by the Aimhigher Mentoring scheme. It is designed by Brightside and is their flagship e-mentoring programme which provides support for 14-19 year olds. The Bright Links e-mentoring system allows mentors and learners to keep in touch by having conversations (mentoring sessions) online. This is done through the Bright Links (secure) website which facilitates the mentor and learner relationship in a safe and stimulating web based environment. E-mentoring is only used once a face to face mentor/learner relationship has been established, to support the relationship when face to face contact is not possible.

In order to use the system, mentors are trained by their universities and will in turn train their own learner(s); both mentor and learner are given individual accounts with personal logins and are issued with information about using the site. Mentors are supported by the university co-ordinator who is also responsible for maintaining and monitoring the system. Once everyone can access the site, the mentors and their learner(s) are able to post messages, share information, discuss news items and access useful educational and career resources. Mentors are able to communicate with their learners on a one-to-one, basis but may also invite their other learners into group discussions and group mentoring sessions.

Once e-mentoring has been initiated, mentors will be expected to communicate regularly with their learners, and continue supporting their learner's progression for the duration of the mentoring relationship. Mentors may find it useful to work with their learners and also access the wide range of online resources which have been designed to assist the progression journeys of young people.

**** BOOKMARK THESE SITES ****

<http://www.bright-links.org/>

<http://www.brightknowledge.org/>

The Bright Links resource library

The resource library is available to ALL MENTORS and not restricted to those who are using Brightlinks. It has up-to-date information on careers, student life, inspirational stories, student finance, and other general matters and can be accessed by anyone without a login.

If you have any questions or concerns about the Bright Links e-mentoring system, please speak to your university co-ordinator.

3.18 Action Planning and Target Setting

An important aspect of your role is to help your learners to identify a set of goals and to work with them to develop an action plan which will help them achieve their goals. These goals can cover a range of issues but the majority of them should be around the Learner Engagement Plan in section 5 which supports the learner journey into higher education.

Remember your role is to guide, support and facilitate, not to decide what their goals should be. It is essential that learners feel they have ownership of their goals. Without this they will not have full commitment to any action plan that is put together and are unlikely to meet their targets. At every stage, make sure that you acknowledge their achievements, praise and validate their efforts. Look for small gains which can build to major achievements.

SMART Targets

Try to use the SMART criteria for all targets you set with your learners. In the example below a Learner has shown some interest in Midwifery as a possible option for Higher Education study and future career.

In this case, a possible SMART target could be:

Download the SMART targets templates from the online Learner Engagement Plan!

“To explore the application process for a BSc. (Hons) course in Midwifery I will attend an Open Day at Birmingham City University during this term”

- **SPECIFIC** - All targets should be clear and specific. For example: A goal which states “attend Open days” would be too vague and unspecific – *Are there any open days specifically for Midwifery that can be attended this term?* It would be useful to look at Birmingham City University website/prospectus and find out when their open days are for the midwifery courses
- **MEASURABLE** - It feels good to have something in front of you indicating a job well done! The target should be measurable and able to show completion – *what evidence can be used to show that the goal was achieved?*
- **ACHIEVABLE** - Make sure that when a target is set, the learner has everything that they need to complete it and it is achievable! *Do they know where to find the information about Open Days at Birmingham City University?*
- **REALISTIC** – It’s okay to stretch and challenge your learner but their targets should be realistic and within reach of the learners – *Is the learner able to actually attend the Open Day/s?* Unrealistic targets can lead to loss of confidence in learners and can be detrimental to the mentoring relationship
- **TIMELY** - A goal must have a target date – we all know what it’s like to have the “someday” dream goal – we never get round to doing them. Deadlines help focus on the target. Make sure that the deadlines are not too short, and not too long! In this case the timeframe is to attend the Open Day by the end of the term.

Tips: If the overall target is huge then you should help them to break it down into SMART milestones. Also make sure that the target is owned by the learner – they should read “I will...” **NOT** “you will...”.

Section 4: Your Mentoring Sessions

4.1 Planning for Mentoring Sessions

Once you have been successfully matched (section 2.4) you will be invited to visit your school or college for an initial launch meeting. A launch is not a formal mentoring session, but instead is a short introductory meeting where you will get to meet the staff and students at the school for the first time.

The details of how the launch may work will often vary between different schools or colleges and your university co-ordinator should be able to advise you of any further detail at the time. However there are always a few things that mentors will need to think about in advance in order to be as prepared as possible. Remember - first impressions count!

4.2 Preparing for the 'Launch' meeting

Use the spaces below to plan for your launch. Some things are obviously important for you to know (who are your learners?) but also think about other practicalities like where to sign in when you arrive?

Questions for the school / college coordinator:

Questions for your learners and their parents / carers:

Following the launch, you should be contacted by the school co-ordinator with the date/times for your first mentoring sessions to take place. This will usually be 1-2 weeks following the launch (depending on the school's calendar).

4.3 Planning your first 1:1 session

We understand that your first session is maybe the most nerve-wracking. Therefore planning activities in advance can help you to feel calmer and more prepared when getting started with your learners

Tip: Always try to plan more activities than you think you may need to fill the time, just in case things go quicker than expected. You can always save unused activities for another session.

The key objectives for the first session are to:

- Break the ice
- Complete the pre-mentoring assessment and Balance Wheel
- Agree ground rules.

Introduction and ice breakers

Although you may have already met at the launch meeting, do not expect your learners to remember any details! Re-introduce yourself, talk a bit about your interests, your course and why you are here. You may wish to discuss with the student about your role as their Aimhigher mentor and find out if they are aware why they have been selected to take part in the scheme?

It is very important that your learner feels comfortable with you and it is unlikely that they will open up to you if you immediately bombard them with questions about university and their future.

You could use the icebreakers from your training session, or other activities you know or remember from your own experiences. The Aimhigher online LEP, Google, Pinterest boards or summer camp & teaching resource websites can be helpful for gaining ideas. *Use this space to make a note of some icebreaker Ideas...*

Pre-Mentoring Assessment and Balance Wheel

This questionnaire and assessment tool should be used by all mentors with each learner at the start of their mentoring relationship, ideally in the first 1:1 session. It helps you and your learners identify their current level of knowledge about their future careers, their study / learning skills and their attitudes to learning, school or college and higher education.

Using the questionnaire and balance wheel to identify and agree learner's priorities and needs was covered during training, but it is not an exact science, and mentors will need to use the full range of skills and techniques explored during training to do this with their learners. What are their aspirations and concerns about the future? What do they feel are their strengths and weaknesses? What subjects do they like and dislike? What clues or lines of enquiry do their responses to the questionnaire provide?

For example:

If your learner has indicated an interest in higher education or a graduate level career:

- Do their other responses identify any worries, concerns or misconceptions that they need help with e.g.:
- Fear of debt / the costs of university
- Concerns about getting the grades needed, or coping with higher level study
- Worries about leaving home or missing friends / family.

If your learner is more interested in getting a job or apprenticeship:

- Do they have a career or job in mind? Do they know what that career or job will involve? Is it a "graduate only" career?
- Do they know anything about high level or degree apprenticeships?

If your learner has ticked "I'm not sure" to the career question in section 2

- They need to be placed in the "definitely needs help" sections of the balance wheel for "future career plans", "subject choices" and possibly the "confidence and motivation" segments of the balance wheel.

How to use the Pre-Mentoring Assessment and Balance Wheel to plan your mentoring support

- If they want to improve their study skills, ask them about how they currently approach homework or revision. Where and when do they try to complete it? How much help or support do they get from family members? Do they use school or college homework or revision support sessions? Do their friends at school / college or home encourage and help them, or distract and demotivate them?
- If they feel they lack confidence or motivation ask them about their hobbies, favourite subjects and any extra-curricular activities they enjoy at school or college. Could these form the basis of an exciting career ambition?
- If they are not making best use of their time at school / college, or their free time, ask them why they feel this. Are there any problems associated with life at school / college, or at home or in wider circles of friendship / relationships?

Ground Rules Card

The Ground Rules Card should be completed in collaboration with your learner or group of learners.

These pages are designed to facilitate the setting of ground rules with your learners. You may wish to photocopy the page in order to give your learners a copy. Ground rules has been covered earlier in training, but just to remind you it is essential that you discuss issues of boundaries and ground rules early on in your mentoring sessions.

There are two essential ground rules that you will need to agree with your learner. The learner should not feel that these have been imposed upon them and instead should feel able to take shared ownership of the ground rules.

Ground Rule #1

Everything you talk about is between you and your learners unless you feel it is essential to pass information onto somebody in authority as the information you have received is of a child protection or an illegal nature. Your ground rule could be “whatever we talk about is between us unless you tell me you are being harmed or you are harming others or yourself” and “you tell me of an incident that you have either been involved in or know of that is illegal”.

Ground Rule #2

This second ground rule must cover restrictions about the sharing of personal details. Your ground rule could say “we will not share personal details for example, mobile phone numbers, email addresses, personal/home address and we will not use social networking sites”.

You can then go on to add as many additional ground rules as you both wish, continue to discuss why any rule should be added to the list and ensure that you both agree before writing it down. Some examples are:

- The importance of turning up on time
- How you will speak to each other, e.g. use of language, names, formal/informal
- Respect for each other’s points of view
- What you will do if one of you cannot attend?

You will need to fill these pages in together with the aim of having a set of ground rules for your mentoring sessions that both you and your learners are willing to sign up to. When the page is complete you will both need to sign and date it as an agreement between you.

You may feel it appropriate to re-visit your ground rules as your mentoring relationship develops; this is fine and may help to reinforce the mentor/learner boundaries later on in the scheme. If you have any questions regarding either the setting of ground rules please contact your university co-ordinator. (Also, see section 3.5 for more information on how to complete this).

4.4 Planning Future Sessions

Covered briefly in section 4.2, your mentoring structure will vary based on timetables, learning styles, activity type etc. However, as a basic guide, a 60 minute session could look like;

- Reconnection with the learner/checking progress since the last meeting (5 mins)
- Deciding on the main focus of today’s exchange (5 mins)
- Working on today’s activities (35-40 mins)
- Agreeing an action plan/targets for the forthcoming week (5 mins)
- Reviewing today’s session and arranging the next meeting. (5 mins).

As a role model it is important that your learners see you as organised and prepared. Try to plan more activities than you may need to fill time, in case things go quicker than expected.

Setting next session dates

You will need to establish with your learners how your sessions will be planned on a weekly basis. Will they see you at the same time every week? Or will they rotate and see you during a different session?

Talk to your school co-ordinator about this in advance (if not covered at the launch meeting) so that you know what the process will be.

4.5 Using the Handbook to plan and record sessions

This section of your handbook includes a number of ESSENTIAL documents to plan, record and review your work with each learner, as follows:

4.5.1 Mentoring Calendar

Use these pages to plan your sessions. At the start of the scheme mark off dates when mentoring definitely won't take place, such as school or university holiday dates, exams or assignment deadlines. You should also add in any planned holidays (both your own and your learners') and other dates such as Bank Holidays. By doing this, you will be able to identify in advance any points where you may need to re-schedule your mentoring day with your school co-ordinator.

You can also use it to record important points in the academic year such as parents' evenings, exam results dates or UCAS deadlines. This will help you plan the timing of your sessions to make sure they are most effective and relevant. Finally, you can use it to record details relevant to your learners and your sessions, e.g. your learners' birthdays, or when your final session will be.

4.5.2 Learner Document Pack:

This section has copies of the key documents and forms you will need to use as a mentor:

- Pre-mentoring Assessment and Balance Wheel (to be completed in the first 1:1 session...see section 4.3.2)
- Ground Rules Cards (to be completed in the first 1:1 session...see sections 3.4 and 4.3.3)
- Target Setting Sheets (for use throughout your mentoring)
- Session Log Notes: Planning, Content and Reflection (for use throughout your mentoring)
- Post-mentoring Assessment and Balance Wheel (to be completed in your final 1:1 session).

4.5.3 Target Setting Sheets

These enable you to record any long or short term targets that you set individually with your learners. You might want to revisit this section at the start of each meeting to review previously set targets. Talk to the learners about how they are well they are progressing towards their current goals. At the end of the mentoring sessions, use the log to record any new targets, how this might be achieved and a realistic deadline to follow it up. Maybe discuss with your learner how you set targets for yourself (whether academically or personally) and work towards these at the same time.

At regular intervals review the targets set over previous weeks and their outcomes. Recalling successes achieved against targets will provide encouragement for the learners to progress further. Where targets have not been completed, the logbooks will provide a reminder of those targets towards which the learners still needs to work.

4.5.4 Session Log Notes: Planning, Content and Reflection

This section can help you plan the content of your mentoring sessions and what resources you may need to organise in advance, but don't forget you need to plan your time around the sessions as well. This can include:

- Organisation of your own student work
- Planning your journey to and from the school
- Setting aside time for planning sessions and reflection
- Organising yourself to ensure you complete all the appropriate paperwork such as time sheets and returning them to your University on time
- Keeping both the school and your university notified as to what you are doing, for example if you are ill, and any changes to the times of your sessions with learners
- Engaging with the evaluation of the scheme.

You are encouraged to take notes during the session and if appropriate, encourage your learner(s) to do the same. Many learners have a school diary and you could encourage them to use that. Doing this should help you to check that you have been an active listener, that you have asked appropriate and useful questions, that you have summarised regularly and adopted a problem solving approach.

If done properly, the handbook will give you a comprehensive record of your sessions, meaning that you can revisit it to see what has been covered in past sessions or to identify missing areas of the engagement plan. Having an accurate record of your activities will also assist you when you need to summarise the content of each session on your timesheets.

Finally, it is important that as a mentor you take the opportunity to reflect on your own performance during each session and make notes on any changes you would make at the next meeting. The mentor handbook is spiral bound to allow you to use it with the learner but the learner can only see the current page that you are working on. Anything you therefore write about yourself in the self-reflection section is just for you. There is also a section where you can record the skills you are developing through your mentoring experience (see section 6).

Keeping your handbook up-to-date

Although we do not expect mentors to share details of individual learner sessions they are not confidential documents. Teachers and/or your university co-ordinator may wish to analyse the content of sessions against the aims of the scheme and outcomes. You should treat it as a professional record of your work and keep them up-to-date.

At the end of the programme we may request that you return your handbook to evidence the great work our mentors do and to improve the scheme's resource and future training programme.

4.6 The Mentoring Calendar



October 2016

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
31					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30



November 2016

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

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Your first session may seem scary, don't worry – it will be great! Spend some time talking informally about your hobbies and interests and also use icebreaker games to get to know your learners...

Remember: agree ground rules from the start and help your learners to complete pre-evaluations, as this will identify areas to work on first!



December 2016

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	



January 2017

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
30	31					1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29

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Don't rush through topics! Pace yourself and make sure you cover each area in depth or you (and your learners) may find it more difficult to stay motivated later on...

Also, after Christmas, remember that exams may interrupt your sessions. If so, let your co-ordinators know in advance and use Brightlinks to keep in touch with your learners.

February 2017

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28					

March 2017

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

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Keep going! If learners start to disengage, use the engagement plan to check back on what you have achieved already and think about setting some new targets with your learners. Additionally, why not give your learners a real experience of university life? Contact your university co-ordinator about additional opportunities such as summer schools, campus visits or open days.

April 2017

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

May 2017

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

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Your learners may be getting stressed about upcoming exams, so offer support and encouragement and maybe some tips on revision, time management or exam techniques. Also, think about exit strategies, plan your final session a few weeks in advance so you can work towards it in a structured way. Don't forget to do the post-evaluations!



June 2017

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

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Talk to your school-coordinator about the Learner of the Year awards, you may be able to nominate one of your own learners for a prize! Stay professional until the end...Don't be tempted to give learners your personal contact information. You can always ask for updates through your school/college co-ordinator in the future. Finally, be proud of all you have achieved this year! Well done!

Let your University know if you want to continue next year!

4.7 Learner Document Packs

The following pages provide mentors with a full suite of documents to use throughout their mentoring journey with up to 6 learners*. For each learner there are the following:

- 1 x pre-mentoring assessment and balance wheel
- 2 x Ground Rules Cards
- 2 x learner Mentoring Target Setting / Review Sheets
- 12 x Session Log Notes / Reflection Sheets
- 1 x post-mentoring assessment and balance wheel.

**Mentors working with more than 6 learners will require another copy of the Handbook*

Section 5: The Learner Engagement Plan (LEP)

5.1 What is the Learner Engagement Plan?

The Learner Engagement Plan (LEP) is a sequential and coherent programme of activities designed for learners in Years 7 to 13. Its main aim is to support the work of the mentors in raising aspirations and improving progression rates to higher education, particularly among more disadvantaged young people.

The programme is not intended to be prescriptive, but should provide a useful starting point upon which to build the exchanges with your learners.

The plan is sequenced to deliver identified learner outcomes at particular phases' in the learner journey through the national curriculum key stages to higher education entry. In our Learner Engagement Plan, seven year groups are represented and can be divided into three phases:

- 1) **Introductory phase: Years 7, 8 and 9 (Key Stage 3)**
- 2) **Developmental phase: Years 10 and 11 (Key Stage 4)**
- 3) **Consolidation phase: Years 12 and 13 (Key Stage 5 / Post-16)**

In broad terms, the Engagement plan covers:

- Settling in to secondary education
- New subjects, new teachers, new friends
- Study and revision skills
- Learning styles
- A skills audit
- Soft skills.
- Subject choice
- Qualifications and courses
- Career implications
- Higher education options
- Applications to higher education via UCAS
- Student finance.

These activities will help the learner achieve a number of outcomes to support their journey, including;

- Ability to make informed decisions and recognise that choices made now may influence career aspirations and options for the long term
- Awareness of HE opportunities, and a basic understanding of HE and its significance
- Recognition of the links between the learners' current curriculum and study at HE level
- An understanding of the different types of institutions and courses
- An understanding of their own learning styles
- Ability to demonstrate and apply the skills required to study at HE level: critical thinking; independent learning; organising their own work, etc.

BOOKMARK THIS SITE!

Online Learner Engagement Plan

www.aimhigherwm.ac.uk/mentoring-scheme/learner-engagement-plan

What follows is a brief printed outline of the LEP. The online version includes links to a wide range of website and resources to help you in your work as a mentor. These are specifically linked to different levels of study and are intended to act as your principal source of support and ideas for developing and delivering your sessions effectively.

5.2 Delivering the Learner Engagement Plan – FAQ's

At the start of the programme it will be important for you to establish a rapport with the learners, and identify their individual learning and development needs, using the start of mentoring evaluation and balance wheel. It should then be possible to jointly agree the nature and content of the sessions, and customise the programme appropriately.

As time progresses, the needs and priorities of learners will change, and you will need to be flexible in your response to these changing requirements. It will be essential to regularly review your learner's progress, and assess the extent to which your learners are becoming more resourceful and independent, with a clear focus on achieving a place in higher education.

During the course of the programme, it will be important to share and discuss your own positive experiences of your journey to higher education, and to highlight the links between your learners' current curriculum and study at undergraduate level.

Q: How do I use the Learner Engagement Plan?

A: Use the Learner Engagement Plan to identify topics to cover in each weekly session.

The plans for each year group contain roughly 12-16 topics, so you can choose to focus on one per week or combine several together depending on your student's needs. You do not need to cover all of these topics in your sessions...they are just for guidance and should be used as a starting point for your own research and planning.

We expect that each activity linked within the online Learner Engagement Plan should take at least twenty to twenty-five minutes, leaving time for the completion of logbooks and target setting. In most cases the activities can be undertaken on a one-to-one basis, but occasionally they will benefit from a paired or small group approach. Some of the activities and their learner outcomes are developed over more than one phase, helping to reinforce and consolidate the learning process.

Throughout the sessions it will be important to signpost learners to additional information, advice and guidance available to them (see the following section and the online Learner Engagement Plan for details of websites).

Please note that although the printed and online Learner Engagement Plan is divided up into year groups, your learners may benefit from activities in other sections. For example, a year 11 pupil may not have the knowledge as described in the year 11 section. Therefore, some of the activities from the year 9 and 10 sections would be better suited.

Q: How are the mentoring sessions structured?

A: This will generally vary depending on your school or college, whether you have group or one-to-one sessions and how long you are able to spend with each learner. However, in general the format of a 60 minute session could be as follows;

Before

- Mentor preparation for the meeting.

During

- Reconnection with the learner/checking progress since the last meeting (5 mins)
- Deciding on the main focus of today's exchange (5 mins)
- Working on today's activities (35-40 mins)
- Agreeing an action plan/targets for the forthcoming week (5 mins)
- Reviewing today's session and arranging the next meeting.(5 mins)

After

- Mentor Handbook reflections, summary of sessions and submission of timesheets.

Q: What if my learner isn't interested in Higher Education?

A: Higher Education isn't going to be the right option for every learner and although Mentors should aim to break down any barriers or preconceptions their learners have about university study, they should not be afraid to approach and explore other options with them.

Although higher education and graduate careers are the underpinning theme of the programme, there is also an emphasis in the activities provided on the development of the softer skills that are so highly valued by employers. Indeed it is hoped that the programme will help to improve communication and decision-making skills, while also enhancing confidence and self-esteem – something that will be of relevance for many of the learners as they navigate their way through years 7 and 8 especially.

It is also important for mentors to introduce other pathways as part of their work with learners. The online Learner Engagement Plan includes links to the Bright Links resource library which has up-to-date information on careers, Apprenticeships and inspirational stories, as well as student life, student finance, and other general matters. The growth in higher level and degree apprenticeships may be of great interest and relevance to some learners.

Q: What else can I do with my learners?

A: Ultimately, you have control over the activities you run in your sessions. Your university coordinator can help with ideas but we encourage all mentors to research and plan their own activities.

Activities can be as academic, active or creative as you want to make them. However, we would ask that mentors check with their school co-ordinator before doing any activity that requires specific resources or spaces, as they may need to comply with the school's health and safety guidelines.

There are also other external events organised by Aimhigher and each of our partner Universities. These include;

- campus visits
- subject enrichment programmes
- Masterclasses,
- Revision classes
- Summer schools
- Higher education conventions.

In many schools and colleges, such events may feature regularly as part of the provision made to raise aspirations and levels of attainment. However, in some you will need to be more proactive in raising awareness among the staff, and in promoting the value and benefits of learner participation.

Further details of such events, together with any deadlines for applications will be available from your university co-ordinator.

USE AIMHIGHER AS A SOURCE OF IDEAS

Search for local university and college open days and other activities here:

<http://www.aimhigherwm.ac.uk/index.php/events>

Follow Aimhigher on Twitter to get up to the minute information on careers, the world of work, colleges, university and Apprenticeship developments:

@AimhigherWM

5.3 Learner Engagement Plan: Generic Resources and Activities

A list of websites is given below, some of which are essential and others useful. Websites 1, 2 and 3 will be referred to regularly during your time as a mentor, so learning to navigate these sites early in the mentoring programme is advised.

GCSE & A-LEVELS ARE CHANGING!

Make sure you understand the new system

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/timeline-of-changes-to-gcses-as-and-a-levels>

ESSENTIAL SUPPORT WEBSITES

www.aimhigherwm.ac.uk/for-teachers-advisors/resources

This site hosts a very comprehensive library of activities which mentors will find invaluable. It is split into two packs;

- **Teacher's Pack** (material for students from Year 9 to Year 11 can also be used/adapted for years 7 and 8)
- **Tutor's Pack** (material for students in Years 12 and 13)

It is strongly suggested that mentors familiarise themselves with this very practical classroom based resource.

Please note that financial information will need to be checked and updated where necessary

www.aimhigherwm.ac.uk/mentoring-scheme/learner-engagement-plan

Here you can download copies of this manual, and access the full learner engagement plans and activities for year groups 7 to 13.

www.brightknowledge.org

This is **THE** site mentors will use for any communication outside of the school environment. will use for any communication outside of the school environment. Here mentors can select from over 100 online activities for their mentees (learners) to carry out – this could be independently or with the mentor present. Login details will be given to mentors during their training.

EXPLORING CAREERS

www.apprenticeships.org.uk
www.career-guide.eu
www.careersworld.co.uk/west-midlands/home
www.careersbox.co.uk
www2.cxdirect.com
www.futuremorph.org
www.myworldofwork.co.uk
www.direct.gov.uk/NationalCareersService
www.prospects.ac.uk
www.stemcareer.com
www.thewhocarestrust.org.uk/pages/what-job-would-suit-me.html
www.totalprofessions.com/career-advisors/school-advisors/non-academic-and-vocational-routes
www.icould.com
www.allaboutcareers.com

RESEARCHING FE/HE COURSES

<http://www.advancingaccess.ac.uk/>
<http://www.futures4me.co.uk/>
www.cukas.ac.uk
www.edexcel.com
www.higherlearningatwork.org/foundation-degrees
www.ofqual.gov.uk
www.scit.wlv.ac.uk/ukinfo
www.thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk/league-tables
www.ucas.com
www.ucasprogress.com
www.ukcoursefinder.com
<http://unistats.direct.gov.uk/>

WHY HIGHER EDUCATION / STUDENT LIFE	STUDY / LIFE SKILLS / VOLUNTEERING					
<p>www.aimhigherwm.ac.uk</p> <p>www1.aston.ac.uk/prospective-students/parents/</p> <p>www.education.gov.uk/publications/eOrderingDownload/Which_Way_Now-2010-11.pdf</p> <p>www.go2uni.net</p> <p>www.hecsu.ac.uk/current_projects_what_do_graduates_do.htm</p> <p>www.nus.org.uk</p> <p>www.opendays.com</p> <p>www.parentsintouch.co.uk</p> <p>www.purepotential.org</p> <p>www.push.co.uk</p> <p>www.realuni.com</p> <p>www.savethestudent.org</p> <p>www.thestudentroom.co.uk</p> <p>www.youtube.com/watch?v=vq7RslzaxKI</p>	<p>academictips.org/acad/index.html</p> <p>www.bbc.co.uk/learning</p> <p>www.brainboxx.co.uk</p> <p>www.channel4learning.com/apps/homeworkhigh/study-skills.html</p> <p>www.cybersmile.org</p> <p>www.dofe.org</p> <p>www.e4s.co.uk/docs/job-interview-technique-tips.htm</p> <p>www.gapwork.com</p> <p>www.i-to-i.com</p> <p>http://www.burstingthebubble.com/leavehome.htm</p> <p>www.newgradskills.com</p> <p>www.redcross.org.uk/Get-involved/Volunteer/Volunteering-for-young-people/Why-volunteer-with-us</p> <p>www.revision-notes.co.uk</p> <p>https://getrevising.co.uk/planner</p> <p>www.s-cool.co.uk/alevel.html</p> <p>www.skills4uni.bham.ac.uk</p> <p>www.theproblemsite.com</p> <p>www.thesite.org</p> <p>www.cybersmile.org</p> <p>http://www.teachit.co.uk/</p>					
MONEY MATTERS	SUPPORT FOR DISABILITIES OR CARE LEAVERS					
<p>www.barclaysmoneyskills.com</p> <p>www.bis.gov.uk/studentfinance</p> <p>www.moneysavingexpert.com</p> <p>www.payscale.com</p> <p>www.practitioners.slc.co.uk/resources/</p> <p>www.studentcalculator.org.uk</p> <p>www.gov.uk/browse/education</p>	<p>https://www.ucas.com/ucas/postgraduate/finance-and-support/students-disabilities</p> <p>www.disabilityrightsuk.org</p> <p>www.bdadyslexia.org.uk/about-dyslexia.html</p> <p>www.nus.org.uk/en/campaigns/disability</p> <p>http://nnecl.org/</p>					
SUBSCRIPTION SITES						
<p>Schools may have membership for the following websites – check with your school co-ordinator to see if you can get access to these resources</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>Kudos</td> <td>E-Clips</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Fast Tomato</td> <td>CASCAiD</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Higher Ideas</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>		Kudos	E-Clips	Fast Tomato	CASCAiD	Higher Ideas
Kudos	E-Clips					
Fast Tomato	CASCAiD					
Higher Ideas						

5.4 Year 7 Engagement Plan

The transition from primary to secondary school is an important and significant event for all students, offering so many new experiences and things to be learnt. Whilst school can be thought of as predominantly concerned with education and academia, the learners also have to navigate their way through adolescence at the same time. The more confident and prepared learners are, the better placed they will be to deal with these times of change. Being a mentor to year 7 learners will most likely involve helping learners develop skills to ensure they settle quickly, establish productive routines and develop a healthy working ethos.

The following table can be used as a guide to help you plan your sessions. You will find comprehensive resources and internet links to compliment this information at

www.aimhigherwm.ac.uk/mentoring-scheme/learner-engagement-plan

TOPIC/THEME	Activity Ideas
<p>Explore the differences between Primary School & Secondary School.</p>	<p>Plan activities which allow learners to explore what was expected of them in primary school and what they feel is expected of them in secondary school. Are differences positive/negative? Could challenges be made into opportunities?</p> <p>Online LEP – Can be adapted to look at the differences learners have to deal with, and then be used as a starting point to address each issue in a bite sized chunk. Aimhigher has produced some fun on-line games about moving up to secondary school for year 6 and 7 students:</p> <p>http://www.aimhigherwm.ac.uk/games/</p> <p><i>New subjects, new teachers, new layout, new routines, new friends, new activities, homework, more independence</i></p>
<p>Find your routine</p>	<p>Look for activities that help the learner focus on what they do; from how/ when they wake up to how/when they prepare for sleep – and their school day in between. Is there anything that can be improved or changed in their routine? How? Why?</p> <p>Online LEP – The mapping can be implemented to help clarify what is needed for a healthy routine to be achieved.</p> <p><i>Not everyone’s day starts the same. They may have no one to say goodbye to when they leave the house, or they maybe the only one leaving the house that day – help learners manage their own routine.</i></p>
<p>Getting organised</p>	<p>Encourage your learners to think about what they need to do in order to be prepared and why it is important / useful to do so.</p> <p>Online LEP – Will help focus the learners as to the benefits of being organised and keeping on top of work.</p> <p><i>Fail to prepare, prepare to fail</i></p>
<p>Learn your school</p>	<p>Use this session to build an understanding of the structure of the school – find out what kind of support is available to learners; head of house, pastoral support, counsellors, 6th form mentors and help the learner develop the confidence to have a chat and ask for help if needed.</p> <p>This topic will help both the learner and the mentor have a clearer understanding of what opportunities they have around them, who learners can go and see if they are having a problem beyond academic mentoring support.</p> <p>Resources – School website, school co-ordinator or careers staff</p> <p><i>If you feel it would be good for your learner to meet with the pastoral support, arrange a visit for both of you to their room, just to become familiar with the location of the room and the counsellor.</i></p>

Year 7 Engagement Plan cont.

TOPIC/THEME	Activity Ideas
The positives of being involved	<p>Explore the positives/importance of being involved - maybe joining school / out of school clubs. Here the aim is to help the learner explore how they learn and what they enjoy. What holds their attention? What can motivate them?</p> <p>Online LEP - gives a template for learners to work on to help order their thoughts about getting involved. Additional session maybe needed to assist the learner to explore what options are available to them. Look on the notice boards at school with the learner.</p>
How do you learn?	<p>Here the aim is to help the learner explore how they learn, what do they enjoy? What holds their attention? What can motivate them? How can they use this to make subjects more interesting?</p> <p>Online LEP – A fun online quiz that helps explore what they like and what kind of learner they are.</p> <p><i>Identify with the learner how they can use this information to help them in their studies at home and within school.</i></p>
Stay focused	<p>Some learners may find the classroom a difficult place to stay alert and concentrate. Encourage learners to think beyond 'it's boring' to see if they are perhaps hungry, too hot, unprepared.</p> <p>Online LEP– Mind maps and memory techniques are explored.</p> <p><i>This session can lead onto a group session if appropriate, where learners can share their technique with others – see online resource link</i></p>
How to deal with/ address bullying.	<p>Optional session if you feel it is appropriate. Looking at strategies and approaches should a learner tell you they are being bullied. As a mentor you will of course be referring this to the school. However some suitable links to signpost learners can be found in the Online LEP resources. Online LEP – useful websites related to bullying issues, workshop ideas and resources about all aspects of bullying</p>
Self-confidence & presentation skills	<p>Explore ideas around self-esteem and confidence. Many learners feel they are 'not good enough' – maybe they struggle with speaking up in class or find it hard when asked to talk in front of a crowd. These skills will be important for them as they move through secondary school, so look at some confidence boosting activities.</p> <p>Online LEP – Mentee activities on Brightlinks about 'Building self-esteem'</p>
Ending the Scheme (Exit Strategies)	<p>Take a few sessions to work towards the end of the scheme, set long term targets and empower your learner to carry on the processes and actions that you have covered in the scheme. Complete the End of Scheme evaluations and refer to section 3.15 of the handbook.</p> <p>Online LEP – Log in to Brightlinks and use 'Endings' mentee activities.</p>

Idea: Looking for a longer term project?

Throughout the course of your sessions, why not get your learners to make a booklet about the things that they learn? Have your learners create a new page each week which summarises the topics they have researched.

5.5 Year 8 Engagement Plan

Many Year 8 learners are still finding their feet and learning how to navigate through their time at school. This is an exciting time, but also a challenge for many, with organisation, priorities and the requirement to be/do more seems overwhelming. During this year a mentor can assist their learners by helping them to see the positives in being organised, being good at time management and goal setting and having confidence to speak up if they need some help. Getting to grips with these issues and skills now, will set a very good foundation for their positive approach to learning and allow them to maximise their potential in future years.

The following table can be used as a guide to help you plan your sessions. You will find comprehensive resources and internet links to compliment this information at

www.aimhigherwm.ac.uk/mentoring-scheme/learner-engagement-plan

TOPIC/THEME	DESCRIPTION
Positive attitude – a way forward?	<p>Help learners discover what their attitude towards certain aspects of their study and investigate if this is affecting them reaching their potential. Forming positive habits has far reaching, long lasting effects</p> <p>Online LEP - These activities can be tailored to your learner to investigate how they feel about areas of school life and explore what influences are important to maintaining a positive attitude</p>
The importance of role models	<p>You can design a session to focus on what makes a successful role model. Discuss with your learner about their own personal role models (celebrities/teachers/family) explore reasons as to why your learner looks up to them, what is it that makes them a good role model and how your learner could adopt similar strategies in their own behaviour.</p> <p>Resources – use websites to research celebrities, perhaps find out how they built their careers – did they go to uni? Did they start a business?</p>
Get involved	<p>Explore the positives/importance of being involved - maybe joining school / out of school clubs. Here the aim is to help the learner explore how they learn and what they enjoy. What holds their attention? What can motivate them?</p> <p>Online LEP - gives a template for learners to work on to help order their thoughts about getting involved. Encourage learners to discover independence, time management, commitment and become part of the school or wider community.</p> <p><i>Websites, notice boards; school, local library, doctors, newsagents – keep your eyes peeled for opportunities</i></p>
Thinking ahead	<p>Use this session is to research options for options at GCSE and beyond (i.e. BTEC's and College)</p> <p>Online LEP - Introductory look at the facts that there are other options for learners, not simply GCSE's</p> <p><i>Check if the school is putting on a performance that your learner could become involved with, even behind the scenes.</i></p>
How to stay focused – what type of learner are you?	<p>This session aims to give the learner an insight to how they learn and how they can adapt activities to suit their learning style.</p> <p>Online LEP - The fun questionnaire helps determine what kind of learning style best suits your young person</p> <p><i>Be creative in helping the learner apply this new knowledge effectively</i></p>

Year 8 Engagement Plan cont.

TOPIC/THEME	DESCRIPTION
Managing Homework	<p>This session looks to encourage year 8 learners to adopt a realistic routine for managing their homework. Identify their current routines/timetables and make an action plan. This will stand them in good stead when the homework load steps up in subsequent years.</p> <p>Online LEP – Online quiz to open up discussion of views on homework and resources on how to manage time and stay motivated.</p>
Study skills	<p>Use this session to help learners develop the backbone that will support them through their academic career by helping them develop good study skills, use tips and resources that have helped you in the past.</p> <p>Online LEP – Activities, hints and tips on memory techniques and creating mind maps.</p> <p><i>This session can lead onto a group session if appropriate, where learners can share their technique with others – see online resource link</i></p>
Introduction to revision and memory skills	<p>Talk to your learner as it is possible that they may be starting Maths and English GCSE in this year. Help them to prepare for tests or assessments by encouraging good study habits to be fostered.</p> <p>Online LEP – Activities, hints and tips on, setting targets specific to revision for tests and learning about memory.</p> <p><i>This session can lead onto a group session if appropriate, where learners can share their technique with others – see online resource link</i></p>
How to deal with/ address bullying.	<p>Optional session if you feel it is appropriate. Looking at strategies and approaches should a learner tell you they are being bullied. As a mentor you will of course be referring this to the school. However some suitable links to signpost learners can be found in the Online LEP resources.</p> <p>Online LEP – useful websites related to bullying issues, workshop ideas and resources about all aspects of bullying</p>
Making subject choices for study in Years 10 / 11, (Key Stage 4).	<p>It may seem early, however some schools now ask students to make this important decision in Year 8. Explore your schools' 'Options' process, highlighting both the compulsory and optional subject routes that are on offer to learners. Talk to your school co-ordinator for specific information.</p> <p>Online LEP – Information for pathways and activities for helping make choices</p> <p><i>The aim is to describe what is involved in the study of the core subjects, and to provide career ideas associated with these subjects. Additionally encourage learners to involve their parents/carers in the schools 'Options Evenings' – usually during the Spring term.</i></p>
Building self-confidence	<p>You can explore ideas around self-esteem and confidence. Many learners can feel they are 'not good enough'. Explore themes that allow them to identify their strengths or challenges.</p> <p>Online LEP – Mentee activities on Brightlinks about 'Building self-esteem'</p>
Communication & presentation skills	<p>Plan a session which looks at communication skills, as this can be important for learners as some may struggle with speaking up in class or find it hard when asked to talk in front of a crowd. These skills will be important for them as they move through secondary school.</p> <p>Resources – mentor handbook, communication games</p>
Ending the Scheme (Exit Strategies)	<p>Take a few sessions to work towards the end of the scheme, set long term targets and empower your learner to carry on the processes and actions that you have covered in the scheme. Complete the End of Scheme evaluations and refer to section 3.15 of the handbook.</p> <p>Online LEP – Log in to Brightlinks and use 'Endings' mentee activities.</p>

5.6 Year 9 Engagement Plan

During year 9 many students will be challenged to tackle some of the biggest decisions they have had to make for themselves so far – making their subject choices. Find out the deadlines and criteria for this process (ask your school co-ordinator) so you can best prepare and support your learner in this difficult choice! Year 9 is quite often when many learners begin to realise they are growing up and they have to begin making decisions for themselves and their future. Mentors may find that they need to concentrate on helping their learners explore careers, options, issues around the 'sense of self' and their future aspirations.

The following table can be used as a guide to help you plan your sessions. You will find comprehensive resources and internet links to compliment this information at

www.aimhigherwm.ac.uk/mentoring-scheme/learner-engagement-plan

TOPIC/THEME	DESCRIPTION
What is Higher Education?	<p>You may want to start by introducing the concept of Higher Education and the terminology surrounding it (degree/ undergraduate/ university). What does Higher Education mean? How is it different from their school?</p> <p>It is good to emphasise to learners the following key points.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Firstly that HE is open to all, regardless of background, gender, race etc 2. Secondly, that it can be flexible in terms of how and where to study. <p>Online LEP - include activities suitable for individual and group activities <i>If appropriate check if the school provides opportunities to visit universities or colleges for campus tours or subject specific activities.</i></p>
Why do people go into Higher Education?	<p>The aim here is for learners to realise that there are a variety of reasons for going into HE, many of which they may not have considered.</p> <p>Online LEP - Highlight the benefits of going to uni using facts and figures, but it is also appropriate to include your own experiences. <i>Check with your university co-ordinator if there are likely to be opportunities for your learners to visit your campus during the academic year.</i></p>
What sort of person are you?	<p>Here you are trying to build an opportunity to help your learner really focus and begin to understand who they are.</p> <p>Online LEP - activities/quizzes which focus on what activities they enjoy, what holds their attention and what motivates them to work hard. <i>Aim to interpret these revelations with your learner to help them realise the relevance to their subjects and learning.</i></p>
Soft skills	<p>You may wish to spend several sessions focusing on 'Soft Skills' With employers placing a considerable emphasis on the development of soft skills, the aim of the session is to discuss the nature and importance of these skills, and the opportunities that exist, both at school and elsewhere, to strengthen and improve them.</p> <p>Online LEP - activities to help build self esteem and personal skills <i>The focus at this stage could be on improving communication, teamwork, leadership, people management, negotiation and problem-solving.</i></p>
Making decisions	<p>Help learners become aware of the importance of being able to make informed decisions. Many learners start to look at their options; many different progression routes into HE and the variety of ways in which they can study.</p> <p>Online LEP – Useful foundation activities exploring how we make decisions. <i>At this stage, the intention is that learners focus on how they approach decision-making, rather than on the decision about HE itself.</i></p>
Goals	<p>Learners face uncharted territory each year as they are confronted with new decisions that will impact on their futures.</p> <p>Online LEP – Insightful activity which can lead to more focussed discussion <i>Encourage learners to identify decisions they are making and then reflect on the decisions they think they should be making.</i></p>

Year 9 Engagement Plan cont.

TOPIC/THEME	DESCRIPTION
<p>Making subject choices for study in Years 10 / 11, (Key Stage 4).</p>	<p>Explore the schools' 'Options' process, highlighting both the compulsory and optional subjects that are on offer to learners next year. Talk to your school co-ordinator for specific information.</p> <p>Online LEP – Information for pathways and activities for helping make choices <i>The aim is to describe what is involved in the study of the core subjects, and to provide career ideas associated with these subjects. Additionally encourage learners to involve their parents/carers in the schools 'Options Evenings' – usually during the Spring term.</i></p>
<p>Researching a range of careers</p>	<p>Learners can research what different careers actually involve and how they can become involved.</p> <p>Online LEP – Use websites with career profiles and interesting facts (i.e. salary information!) <i>Check to see if the school has subscribed to careers sites such as 'Fast tomato' 'e-clips' or 'kudos'. These sites can be very useful.</i></p>
<p>Qualifications and courses</p>	<p>The aim here is to explore the range of types of qualifications and courses available to young people. What is the right route for them? What are the benefits / disadvantages of different qualification types?</p> <p>Online LEP – Websites and activities looking at; Entry Level Certificates; GCSEs; The Diploma; BTEC; National Vocational Qualifications; Vocationally-Related Qualifications; Apprenticeships; Essential skills <i>It is important here that you use up-to-date information; if in doubt contact your university co-ordinator or a careers advisor at the school.</i></p>
<p>Routes into Higher Education</p>	<p>The focus here is on the variety of pathways and progression routes that can lead to Higher Education – not just A-Levels!</p> <p>Online LEP – Use information to show that the Diplomas and Apprenticeships can be key milestones on the path to HE. The session can also be used by learners to research the entry requirements in a subject(s) of interest – at three distinctly different HEIs. <i>Encourage learners to involve their parents/carer in their preparation for HE. Many HEIs have sections on their websites which focus on parents' guides to HE.</i></p>
<p>Developing study skills and time management</p>	<p>The session highlights how to develop effective study skills and why this is important</p> <p>Online LEP - Lots of great activities and clear hints and tips re: revision timetables, memory and examination techniques, writing assignments and time management <i>Investigate and discuss the opportunities that are being provided for study skills workshops and extra revision sessions at school, and encourage the learners to attend.</i></p>
<p>Money matters</p>	<p>Although learners need to be aware of the expenses they will incur as a student, it is important that financial issues are not seen as a barrier to going on to HE, and that there is some brief mention of bursaries, grants and loans as well as the cost of living as a student</p> <p>Online LEP - The topic explores the cost of accommodation, travel, food, clothes, laundry, socialising, sport and mobile phone use – keep it light and fun <i>Remember – learners currently don't have to pay university fees loans back until they have left university and are earning £21,000 per year.</i></p>
<p>Ending the Scheme (Exit Strategies)</p>	<p>Take a few sessions to work towards the end of the scheme, set long term targets and empower your learner to carry on the processes and actions that you have covered in the scheme. Complete the End of Scheme evaluations and refer to section 3.15 of the handbook.</p> <p>Online LEP – Log in to Brightlinks and use 'Endings' mentee activities.</p>

5.7 Year 10 Engagement Plan

During year 10 many learners will be settling into their chosen subjects, following their exams curriculum. This year is when many undertake valuable work experience too. Mentors working with year 10 learners will likely find a need to start helping them set a direction, looking at how attitudes can influence success, and how work experience can be so necessary and valuable.

The following table can be used as a guide to help you plan your sessions. You will find comprehensive resources and internet links to compliment this information at www.aimhigherwm.ac.uk/mentoring-scheme/learner-engagement-plan

TOPIC/THEME	DESCRIPTION
What does HE mean to me?	<p>The aim here is to create an opportunity for learners to discuss how they feel about higher education.</p> <p>Online LEP – Activities addresses many key concerns or misconceptions about university or college life, and also enables learners to focus on the social and non-academic benefits.</p> <p><i>Check with the school on applications and arrangements for Masterclasses and Subject Enrichment Programmes organised by Aimhigher and higher education providers.</i></p> <p><i>Check with your school co-ordinator to see if your learners are eligible to apply for UniFest Summer School places.</i></p>
Why do it?	<p>Here learners identify the wider benefits of higher education, the aim is to help them identify places they can find out answers to questions they may have.</p> <p>Online LEP – Learners are encouraged to conduct preparatory research on the internet.</p> <p><i>Encourage learners to speak to friends and/or family about any concerning issues.</i></p>
True or false?	<p>Here learners can explore the possible misconceptions or prejudices about higher education</p> <p>Online LEP – Activities investigate whether ten relevant statements are true or false.</p> <p><i>Encourage learners not to make assumptions without having all the facts.</i></p>
Richer pickings	<p>Learners may find it beneficial to research the long-term benefits of higher education, maybe look at some case studies of famous graduates?</p> <p>Online LEP – Activity compares the incomes of two young people, one who went straight from school to work, and one who entered the same career sector having been to university. This resource can be backed up by looking at job websites and newspaper adverts.</p> <p><i>Check with the school on the opportunities that exist for learners to visit HEIs for campus tours and for subject-specific activities.</i></p>
What's stopping me?	<p>Use activities where the focus is on the possible barriers to higher education progression (we cover this in section 3.11)</p> <p>Online LEP – Activities exploring money worries, not wishing to change location, not knowing how to apply etc. and how these can be overcome.</p> <p><i>Investigate and discuss the opportunities that are being provided for study skills workshops and extra revision sessions, and encourage the learners to attend as appropriate.</i></p>
Financial help	<p>Here the learner explores the practical implications of moving into higher education. It is important to stress that money doesn't have to be a barrier to learning.</p> <p>Online LEP - Activities and comprehensive information for both learners and parents/carers</p> <p><i>Encourage learners to involve their parents/carers in their preparation for HE. Many HEIs have sections on their websites which focus on parents' guides to HE.</i></p>

Year 10 Engagement Plan cont.

TOPIC/THEME	DESCRIPTION
Are you up for the job?	<p>The aim of this session is to encourage learners to think about the different types of jobs.</p> <p>Online LEP - activity looks at one organisation, the job roles and the qualifications needed for each position.</p> <p><i>Encourage learners' understanding that higher levels of qualifications lead to higher-level jobs, and the benefits that these jobs offer.</i></p>
Routes into higher education	<p>This session is designed to show that there are more ways into higher education than just A-levels.</p> <p>Online LEP – Printable handouts with notes and online information sites exploring alternative routes through Apprenticeship programmes.</p> <p><i>Share personal examples, or examples of people you know who have not taken the traditional route into higher education via A'levels.</i></p>
Help!	<p>The session should encourage learners to think about where they can find help about higher education</p> <p>Online LEP - Discover online information services and relevant activity</p> <p><i>Check with the school if they subscribe to careers sites such as E-Clip, Fast Tomato or Kudos</i></p>
Work experience	<p>Here, encourage learners to consider the types and benefits of work experience.</p> <p>Online LEP – Sites with advice on how to organise a work placement, and some tips for making the most of the experience and also help from a self esteem activity.</p> <p><i>Stress to your learner that Positive Attitude is a must.</i></p>
Finding a career that's right for you.	<p>This session has a focus on identifying activities learners enjoy both inside and outside of school, and researching the careers that match up with them.</p> <p>Online LEP – Activity enables learners to explore the type of career that would suit them best via questionnaire and activities.</p> <p><i>It's a good idea to introduce learners to other resources detailed, to help with career planning.</i></p>
Exploring Apprenticeships	<p>Here there is an opportunity to extend the learner's knowledge of Apprenticeships</p> <p>Online LEP – Links to the National Apprenticeship Service and Gov.uk guidance.</p>
Learning and qualifications	<p>Here learners can find out about the key issues surrounding learning and qualifications.</p> <p>Online LEP – Plenty of activities to examine each different type of qualification, with sections on AS/A-levels, NVQs, HNCs and HNDs, Foundation Degrees and Honours Degrees. Activities also explore learning styles.</p> <p><i>These activities lend themselves to be carried out in small groups – learners may then be encouraged to discuss differences</i></p>
Choices at 16: what's right for you?	<p>The emphasis here is on the need to keep learning beyond sixteen, either full-time at school or college, or through work-based training.</p> <p>Online LEP – Sites to help learners research some of the learning opportunities described in their local area.</p> <p><i>Whilst generic national sites are useful, take time to research local opportunities so you are prepared to help the learners find this information for themselves.</i></p>
Ending the Scheme (Exit Strategies)	<p>Take a few sessions to work towards the end of the scheme, set long term targets and empower your learner to carry on the processes and actions that you have covered in the scheme. Complete the End of Scheme evaluations and refer to section 3.15 of the handbook.</p> <p>Online LEP – Log in to Brightlinks and use 'Endings' mentee activities.</p>

5.8 Year 11 Engagement Plan

Year 11 learners have much to prepare for during this year. Not only do they have exam pressures, they also need to make decisions about their time after compulsory education. In addition many year 11 learners are mindful of the requirement to become more independent. Mentors will likely be involved in assisting learners to hone revision/study skills, explore progression options and careers. It may also be useful to explore independence issues such as budgeting or securing part time employment.

The following table can be used as a guide to help you plan your sessions. You will find comprehensive resources and internet links to compliment this information at www.aimhigherwm.ac.uk/mentoring-scheme/learner-engagement-plan

TOPIC/THEME	DESCRIPTION
What do you already know about Higher Education?	Learners can take the opportunity, either on an individual or group basis, to brainstorm all the knowledge they already have about HE. Online LEP – Activities are designed to familiarise learners with some of the jargon related to HE. <i>Check with the school on applications and arrangements for HE Masterclasses and Subject Enrichment Programmes</i>
Where will I be in ten years' time?	To encourage learners to think about the future and how it might be affected by the choices they make now. Online LEP – Activities and worksheets have some good inspirational ideas. Some need prep work before use. <i>Help learners realise the steps needed to get to where they would like to be.</i>
Typical student!	The aim during this session is to address stereotypes and to look not only at the reasons people might have for going to university, but also to explore what might put some people off going. Online LEP - Comprehensive activities to address the above issues
Name that job!	This session will help learners recognise the range of different careers open to them. Online LEP – The learner (or you) will need to log in to the final website to be able to take the study interest questionnaire, linking interests with HE courses/job. <i>Check with the school on the opportunities that exist for learners to visit higher education institutions for campus tours and for subject- specific activities.</i>
Ways into a career	Encourage learners to consider how qualifications impact on career choices Online LEP - Activities' addressing ways into careers. <i>Are there opportunities for study skills workshops and extra revision sessions within school? If so, encourage the learners to attend as appropriate.</i>
Choices at 16: what's right for you?	The emphasis here is on the need to keep learning beyond sixteen, either full-time at school or college, or through work-based training. Online LEP - Sites to help learners research some of the learning opportunities described in their local area. <i>Whilst generic national sites are useful, take time to research local opportunities so you are prepared to help the learners find this information for themselves.</i>
Routes into Higher Education	The aim is to raise awareness of the variety of routes into HE, and the range of HE options from which to choose. Online LEP – Explores alternative qualifications for entry into higher education and the core features of Foundation Degrees. <i>Encourage learners to involve their parents in their preparation for HE. Many HEIs have sections on their websites which focus on parents' guides to HE.</i>

Year 11 Engagement Plan cont.

TOPIC/THEME	DESCRIPTION
Which course?	Explore with learners the extensive range of courses available. Online LEP – Highlight the need to consider types of qualifications and the style of studying that is best suited to the learner. Also Study Interest Questionnaire. <i>Check the opportunities available at local HEIs for learners to become involved in The Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) programme, and liaise with the school and university co-ordinators.</i>
Auditing my skills	Focuses on helping learners to identify the study skills needed to succeed in HE. Online LEP – Study skills audit. <i>You could also discuss thoughts on the qualities graduate employers look for in potential employees.</i>
Developing revision skills	Here, the session can cover a range of skills related to revision and examinations. Online LEP – Activities include looking at note taking, analysis, memory techniques and the development of a preferred learning style. There is also an opportunity to produce a revision timetable. <i>Hindsight is a wonderful thing. Share your experiences, impressing the benefits of being organised and putting the work in</i>
Learning styles	The aim here is to help learners to discover their preferred learning style and how to use that knowledge to their advantage. Online LEP – Help identify learning styles and how they might best use this style to study and learn more effectively. <i>This session could be run in small groups to encourage discussion</i>
Making decisions	Highlights how we need and use information in order to make informed decisions. Online LEP - explore how we use levels of information to help us make our decisions and relates it to options for further and higher education. <i>You may want to share your experience of making choices and if you were happy with the amount of information you gathered</i>
Graduate market trends	Find out what happens to graduates after they leave higher education. Online LEP – Information and activities on where graduates are employed, undertaking what kind of job. <i>You may want to encourage your learner to think about finding a summer job</i>
Budgeting – Budget battles	The aim here is to explore basic budgeting. Online LEP – some fun and printable resources <i>How about asking learners to help you put together your budget!</i>
Understanding personal finances / banking	Money matters are important, use this session to help learners gain a good background to understanding about finances Online LEP – Lots of activities which help develop good money management skills help in everyday life. <i>Impress how keeping control of finance is important whilst within higher education too</i>
Higher Education funding	Focus on the financial issues that students and their families need to consider. Online LEP – Information on fees, loans, grants, bursaries and scholarships <i>Share info of the current financial support your university offers to new students</i>
Ending the Scheme (Exit Strategies)	Take a few sessions to work towards the end of the scheme, set long term targets and empower your learner to carry on the processes and actions that you have covered in the scheme. Complete the End of Scheme evaluations and refer to section 3.15 of the handbook. Online LEP – Log in to Brightlinks and use 'Endings' mentee activities.

5.9 Year 12 Engagement Plan

Many learners in year 12 are adjusting to the change in learning / teaching styles and the increased independence on offer. This year, learners are looking at the 'for and against' debate of going into higher education, and are mindful of courses and careers.

Mentors working with year 12 learners will possibly be helping learners carry out thorough investigations to their skills and look to match them with suitable careers and courses. Looking at alternative progression routes and making applications to higher education will also be very pertinent. Mentors may spend time working with learners to dispel myths about HE and also work through money worries.

The following table can be used as a guide to help you plan your sessions. You will find comprehensive resources and internet links to compliment this information at www.aimhigherwm.ac.uk/mentoring-scheme/learner-engagement-plan

TOPIC/THEME	DESCRIPTION
Learning Styles	<p>This session helps learners to identify different learning styles and forms of assessment.</p> <p>Online LEP - The activities raise awareness of the different approaches to study and assessments. This can be used to assist with the change in demands between yr 11 and yr 12 studying.</p> <p><i>Check on applications and arrangements for Masterclasses and Subject Enrichment Programmes organised by Aimhigher and the HEIs</i></p>
What can higher education do for you? And what's it all about?	<p>Use this session to outline the benefits of higher education and explore progression routes.</p> <p>Online LEP – activities help learners answer some important questions related to higher education.</p> <p>It raises their awareness of the extensive range of courses available, and looks at the different types of university or college.</p> <p><i>This session can be conducted individually or in small groups.</i></p>
Recognising your skills and potential	<p>Encourage your learners to investigate and discuss qualities employers will look for in potential employees, why and how they can improve these skills themselves.</p> <p>Online LEP – activities look at discussing skills and attributes: Working with others; Improving own learning and performance; Problem-solving Information technology; Communication; Employability skills.</p>
Which subject? Which Qualification?	<p>It is important to help learners think about their subject choice and qualification. Reinforce that these decisions should take precedent over where or how to study.</p> <p>Online LEP – detail qualification types and pathways, also Introduce learners who are unsure of their subject interests to the online questionnaire.</p> <p><i>Investigate and discuss the opportunities that are being provided for study skills workshops and extra revision sessions, and encourage the learners to attend as appropriate.</i></p>
Where to study?	<p>Focuses on narrowing the choice of 300 plus UCAS institutions, over 150 of which provide only higher education courses.</p> <p>Online LEP - video of uni student talking through her experience. Activities and online info.</p> <p><i>Check dates of Higher Education Open Days and liaise with school regarding visit arrangements.</i></p>

Year 12 Engagement Plan cont.

TOPIC/THEME	DESCRIPTION
UCAS process Applying for a course	The activity explores the application process and qualification requirements. Online LEP – activity and signpost sites for information especially getting to know UCAS <i>Most schools will address this, but support your learner to ensure they have a clear grasp.</i>
UCAS Entry Profiles	Use this session to assist learners in the process of narrowing down choices Online LEP - research entry profiles for detailed information about HEIs, their admissions policies and the selection criteria for each course. <i>Consider working on 'making decisions' activities from yr11 if necessary</i>
Getting it right first time	Ensures that applicants are aware of some of the reasons that lead students to discontinue their studies. Online LEP – The activity is designed to show how they can minimise the risks of this happening. <i>Check applications for the local Higher Education Convention</i>
Student Finance	Use this session to highlight the financial issues that students and their families need to consider. Online LEP – fees, loans, grants, bursaries and scholarships. The question of whether it pays to study at this level is also explored. <i>Check that parents/carers are aware of HE information evenings. Many HEIs also have sections on their websites specifically designed for parents in addition to moneysavingexpert.com</i>
Student Life	The aim of this session is to prepare for the changes in lifestyle and learning whilst studying at University. Online LEP – Activities address balancing demands, self esteem and how to cope with all the pressures that come along with additional independence <i>Managing expectations is vital to ensuring learners know what to expect and feel sure it is right for them.</i>
Get Involved	Encourage learners to see that applications to university depend on more than just academic grades Online LEP – information on how to get involved in additional activities and/or employment <i>Ask learners if they think that your role as a mentor is a good thing to be involved in, if so why?</i>
Draft a UCAS personal statement	Use this session to discuss points to consider when attempting the first draft of the personal statement. Online LEP – The activity emphasises the reflective nature of the process. <i>Check dates and registration for any subject or institution-specific entrance tests</i>
Review first draft of UCAS personal statement	This session will focus on the personal statement. Online LEP – links to the section of 'Apply' from the UCAS website which is very appropriate. <i>Encourage your learners to read their personal statement out loud and to show it to others for comment.</i>
Ending the Scheme (Exit Strategies)	Take a few sessions to work towards the end of the scheme, set long term targets and empower your learner to carry on the processes and actions that you have covered in the scheme. Complete the End of Scheme evaluations and refer to section 3.15 of the handbook. Online LEP – Log in to Brightlinks and use 'Endings' mentee activities.

5.10 Year 13 Engagement Plan

Issues with year 13 learners are often very specific and focussed on exams and 'what's next'. Here mentors will possibly find learners need study skills support during their current year, but also to prepare them for the year ahead. Helping learners gain a realistic view of what to expect whilst in Higher Education; study time, independence, finance, budgeting, work/study/social life balance – will be of paramount importance. Mentors may find themselves preparing learners for university interviews and possibly helping to identify useful additional work experience.

The following table can be used as a guide to help you plan your sessions. You will find comprehensive resources and internet links to compliment this information at www.aimhigherwm.ac.uk/mentoring-scheme/learner-engagement-plan

TOPIC/THEME	DESCRIPTION
Where to study Lifestyle: home or away?	<p>These sessions can help learners gain an understanding of where universities are geographically and what that means in terms of lifestyle.</p> <p>Online LEP – Activities matches HEIs to their locations, and allows learners to discuss the distance and length of time it would take to get to each location. Activities also focus on the advantages and disadvantages of different locations. The activity enables learners to consider whether it is better to live at home, or to move to a new area.</p> <p><i>Remember that some of these suggestions can be carried out by the learner at home, maybe with parents, carers and siblings too</i></p>
UCAS Tariff / Understanding HE league tables / Application processes	<p>Looks at the system for allocating points to qualifications used for entry to HE, how to apply and also league tables</p> <p>Online LEP – explore the non-qualification criteria that might be used by HEIs when making decisions about offers. The activities also examine what happens to the UCAS application after it has been submitted. Also looks into what factors have fed the demand for HE league tables, and explores the arguments for and against such tables.</p> <p><i>Check dates of Higher Education Open Days and liaise with school regarding visit arrangements.</i></p> <p><i>Check internal school deadlines for the submission of completed UCAS application forms, and discuss implications with the learners.</i></p>
University statistics / Student Satisfaction Surveys	<p>The NSS enables learners to see what over 177,000 undergraduate students felt about the quality of their HE experience. Also this session can be used to look at finalising the personal statement.</p> <p>Online LEP – The initial activity allows learners to investigate and compare university statistics for their chosen subjects and HEIs. This session could also allow learners to refine and begin to finalise their UCAS personal statements.</p> <p><i>Encourage learners to show their personal statement to others, to not get attached to their first drafts and to read their personal statement aloud.</i></p>
Work experience, employment & Gap Years?	<p>Look to highlight the benefits of work experience whilst in HE and describe the different types. Also focus on the strategies for seeking and securing work experience....or maybe take a gap year</p> <p>Online LEP - look at what would be relevant work experience and Explores the benefits of taking a well-structured and purposeful 'gap' year. Also looks at the different types of 'gap' year.</p> <p><i>Share your experience of work experience/employment and how you make/ made the most of it.</i></p>

Year 13 Engagement Plan cont.

TOPIC/THEME	DESCRIPTION
Skills and strengths.... And part time employment.	<p>Enable learners to idea-storm a list of skills and attributes needed for a particular profession/job.</p> <p>Online LEP resources – Give learners the chance to investigate the level of qualifications they need for different jobs, and to look at real-life job adverts and the pay offered.</p> <p><i>Show students examples of jobs advertised through your university students' union or 'jobs shop'</i></p>
Study skills	<p>This session shows how learners can maximise the academic experience by gaining an understanding of 'how it all works' effectively from an early point.</p> <p>Online LEP – The topics include, time management; taking lecture notes; managing stress; memory techniques; action learning; skimming tips; classroom participation; learning styles; project management and examination tips.</p> <p><i>Check on revision courses being offered either in school/college, or by external providers.</i></p>
Identifying barriers to HE & Handling Interviews	<p>Help learners to recognise and be encouraged to address the visible and invisible barriers to HE, including the possibility of an HE interview.</p> <p>Online LEP – activities are written to really help learners to allay their own fears and Investigates the factors which might determine whether an applicant is called for an interview and what to expect. Also suggests suitable ways to prepare for such interviews</p> <p><i>Ask your university coordinator for a copy of past interview structure and questions for relevant subjects</i></p>
Reasons to be cheerful – social and non-academic benefits of HE	<p>Use this session to explore the broader aspects of life at university and examines the social and non-academic benefits.</p> <p>Online LEP – information sites covering discounts, societies, sports, overseas opportunities and preparing for uni activity</p> <p><i>Emphasise the importance of getting the study work/fun balance right</i></p>
Additional support for students with a disability	<p>This session will be very useful for students with an already diagnosed disability, or a suspected disability such as dyslexia</p> <p>Online LEP – Investigates the issues relevant to learners who may have support needs, e.g. accessibility, study facilities and finance. Makes reference to the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA).</p> <p><i>Share what support your own university offers students with a disability</i></p>
Money facts	<p>Use this session to examine the financial problems that could be encountered. It is also an opportunity to look at the reality of graduate vs. non-graduate earnings to put things into perspective.</p> <p>Online LEP – highlights the extra financial support to which HE students may be entitled if they meet certain conditions set by their university or college, bursaries or scholarships offer additional funding that the student does not have to pay back. Information sites for graduate earnings too.</p> <p><i>Each University or college will have information on its own bursary scheme on their website.</i></p>
Next steps checklist	<p>Within this session encourage applicants to develop a calendar/checklist in support of their applications.</p> <p>Online LEP – activities looking at how to be organised and prepared.</p> <p><i>Drawing up a timetable may take some time and research, however it will save the learner time (and worry) in the long run. They will be more in control of their progress.</i></p>

Year 13 Engagement Plan cont.

TOPIC/THEME	DESCRIPTION
Revision programme	<p>Introduce the learners to the host of online support available for revision.</p> <p>Online LEP – Clear and easy to follow notes and activities, divided into three sections: ‘learn it’, ‘test it’ and ‘revise it’. Aims to compliment and broaden the online learning experience by providing high quality information via links to other sites.</p> <p><i>Suggest and help the learners to create a revision timetable.....is it realistic, do they want you to check each session if they are sticking to it? If they aren’t following the timetable, what issues need to be addressed so they can?</i></p>
A day in the life includingHow I got where I am today.	<p>Use this session to illustrate the marked differences between a typical day in the life of a school/college student and HE student.</p> <p>Online LEP – Some great printable activities to cover this theme. Also includes an activity where learners are encouraged to match the quotes from six successful graduates about their HE experiences.</p> <p><i>Its important to sharesee if any of the teachers are willing to share their experiences</i></p>
Spend, spend, spend Balance your budget	<p>This session will look realistically at student spending.</p> <p>Online LEP – Look into the moving-in costs for either a hall of residence or student flat. Also helps to distinguish which are needs and which are wantsIntroduces learners to the likely costs of being in HE and to managing funds through budgeting.</p> <p><i>Managing learner expectations to finance and budgeting is key. If your budgeting skills are a little shaky, learn alongside them</i></p>
University challenge: are you ready?	<p>This session is light and quick, additional time can be used to plan where the learner would like additional input perhaps?</p> <p>Online LEP – A short, light-hearted test that assesses learners’ readiness to cope with a new lifestyle in HE.</p> <p><i>Were you ready? What would you have done differently? Is there anything you wish you’d been told?</i></p>
Finance – loans and supplementary income.	<p>This session will look at when a loan isn’t a loan and talk about ideas to supplement the student income.</p> <p>Online LEP – By using the internet, learners are encouraged to explore the range of loans available, including student loans. Activities also enable learners to idea-storm as many ways as possible of supplementing income before going into HE or whilst at college/university.</p> <p><i>What ways do you know of for University students to supplement their income – mentoring for example?</i></p>
Loan repayments	<p>Use this session to look at how the loan system works and how and when repayments are made.</p> <p>Online LEP – Information sites to use with students – including student calculator</p> <p><i>This may be a good time to recap/reassure why people go to university and why this are being encouraged by the government.</i></p>
If I were you...	<p>This session is a really useful to help learners realise they are taking the progression route that is suitable for them.</p> <p>Online LEP – Consolidates what has been covered in previous sections, and gets learners to act as ‘Mentors / Personal Advisers’ for three young people.</p> <p><i>Positivity and praise go a long waythe learner’s success in this activity will reflect on what you have helped them learnenjoy seeing them give measured well thought out responses!</i></p>
Ending the Scheme (Exit Strategies)	<p>Take a few sessions to work towards the end of the scheme, set long term targets and empower your learner to carry on the processes and actions that you have covered in the scheme. Complete the End of Scheme evaluations and refer to section 3.15 of the handbook.</p> <p>Online LEP – Log in to Brightlinks and use ‘Endings’ mentee activities.</p>

Section 6: Skills & Employability Development

6.1 Development of Employability Skills through Mentoring

As a mentor, your role is to primarily support the development of your learners through the various activities and sessions that you plan. However, it is also important to recognise that as a mentor, your own personal and professional skills will also develop through your work on the mentoring programme.

In order to support your own personal growth and development we would like to invite all mentors to establish their own practice of self-reflection and assessment in order to gain better understanding of your own strengths, skills and progress.

After each mentoring session you should take a moment to reflect on what happened, what went well, what you will do differently next time. You can do this by completing the weekly session pages of your handbook. This understanding will be the key to articulating your employability skills and relevant examples for a CV, application or interview in the future.

6.2 Skills Review

The tables below give a list of the employability skills we feel can be developed through mentoring and we have given you some indication of how you can identify your personal development of those skills through your sessions.

Fundamental Skills

Skill	How is this skill developed through Aimhigher Mentoring?
Oral & Written communication	<p>The fundamental skill required for mentoring is good communication. To start with a mentor must be aware of what is good, bad and fit for purpose communication in any circumstance.</p> <p>The theory of communication and the opportunity to put it into practice is covered in the mentor training programme.</p> <p>Mentors are expected to develop these skills further through their mentoring experiences as communication is required with a diverse group of people which include schools, college, university staff and young people requiring mentors to use different communication methods in different situations.</p> <p>Written communication is developed through the use of e-mentoring and the completion of log books. Verbal communication skills are developed through face-to-face individual and group mentoring sessions.</p>
Numeracy	<p>You are required to provide accurate timesheets, to understand the student finance system and be able to articulate your own financial planning and budget management skills..</p>
IT skills	<p>Mentors need to use IT skills to access materials and interrogate web sites. You are also required to use electronic communication with both learners and other colleagues, associated with the scheme. Some mentors may also be required to submit information electronically.</p>

Thinking Skills

Skill	How is this skill developed through Aimhigher Mentoring?
Reflection	After each mentoring session mentors are required to reflect on the progress of their learners and their own performance. The results of this reflection should then be used to plan the next session.
Action planning / Organisational skills	Each mentor is required to see the project through with the learners that are allocated to them. Your own approach to the project should be well organised as the commitment needs to be balanced against other commitments you may have. Time management is essential to ensure a mentor is available at the allotted times, reliable and able to commit to the target number of exchanges with learners. At the same time you are required to pass these skills onto learners through supporting them in the development of actions plans, goal setting and organising their approach to their education. Mentors will be required to gather feedback on progress, test and change plans if needed and use correct tools to support and record this task.
Analysis & Decision making	Mentors are required to analyse situations their learners may be in and empower them to make decisions about how to deal with them and progress. A mentor is not required to make decisions for the learners and must be non-judgemental.
Problem solving	Mentors are required to support learners in defining barriers to learning and apply strategies for change often by using their own learning experience. Evaluation of the method used is essential to support the learner to learn and move on. Mentors may also be presented with problems within the scheme that affect their ability to deliver and therefore will be required to go through the same process for themselves.
Ability to put theory into practice	The mentor training and CPD activity provides a theoretical background to mentoring which the mentor is required to put into practical use with their learners.
Creativity, Innovation & Initiative	Mentors are required to analyse learner needs and adapt their approach and materials to meet those needs. If one method does not work you need to be creative in developing a different approach. Initiative is required particularly within the school environment where staff may not always be available to sort out day to day operational issues.
Work awareness	Mentors are required to fit into their work environment which is within a school or college. You will need an understanding of the education system in England and the political context in regards to the target learners you are working with. You need to be able to observe the environment you are in and understand appropriate behaviour and approach.

People and Social Skills

Skill	How is this skill developed through Aimhigher Mentoring?
Team working & Leadership	This is fundamental to mentoring as mentors need to use different group working techniques with young people as identified in their training programme.
Self-belief	A positive and 'can-do' attitude is essential as these are also the attitudes that mentors need to develop in their learners. Promotion of yourself, as an undergraduate student who has overcome barriers to achieve educational advancement is essential with the learners you are working with who see similar barriers as insurmountable.
Influence & Negotiating	These skills are needed to work with learners to adopt and follow through actions to achieve agreed targets.
Networking	Throughout your mentoring placement you will be required to work with a variety of people with whom you will need to establish a good working relationship. The programme has a number of objectives which you need to be aware of and work towards. You will be required to present yourself as a role model and maintain a professional identity.
Interpersonal skills	You are required to show empathy with young people. Mentors need to understand the learner's particular circumstances and build trust in the relationship. You are training in active listening and must put it into practice on every mentoring occasion.
Independent working	Mentors are required to be responsible and committed individuals and must understand the damage that can be done to young people if you do not demonstrate these skills throughout the mentoring programme.

Personal Development Skills

Skill	How is this skill developed through Aimhigher Mentoring?
Integrity & Honesty	Every part of this applies to mentoring. The scheme is about mentors developing a relationship with a group of young people through an academic year. They must be aware of the impact they are having on young people and understand the serious nature of being a role model for young people.
Self-awareness	Mentors need to be aware of their own strength, weaknesses and values as well as being able to identify their own prejudices. This supports you to understand how young people perceive themselves and others. Once this understanding is established the mentor works with the learner to remove barriers to progression.
Adaptability & flexibility	Required to ensure different and changing learner needs are met.
Commitment	Mentors need to be aware of the impact they can have on young people as role models. They are required to demonstrate total commitment to the programme once they have met with their learners and should show perseverance even when their learners do not.
Responsibility for others	A full understanding of child safeguarding issues and procedures at the same time as being responsible for your own behaviour as a responsible adult working with young people.

NOTES

Fill out your School or College Term Dates here:

Autumn Term 2016	Spring Term 2017	Summer Term 2017
Half Term	Half Term	Half Term





Aimhigher

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University of Birmingham,
Edgbaston, Birmingham B15 2TT
Telephone 0121 415 8176

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Aimhigher Pre-Mentoring Assessment 2016-17

This form asks about your future career aspirations, school life and knowledge of higher education and university. We need this information so your mentor can support you and to improve the work we do to help young people reach their full potential. At the end of your work with Aimhigher mentors you will be asked to answer these questions again, so we can see how mentoring has helped you. All information collected will be held confidentially. If you agree we will also use the information to track your future progress.

Declaration (Please read and tick as appropriate)

I have read the information above and understand that it is part of a research project. I am willing for my answers to be used in the research project and for my answers to be matched with information on my involvement in Aimhigher, how I do in my exams and if I go on to study in higher education, using Aimhigher, school census, NPD, UCAS, HESA and HEAT data. I understand that my answers will be held confidentially and that I will not be identified in any reports by the research team.

Yes No

Your Details

First Name: Surname: Home Postcode

Gender: Female / Male Date of Birth: ___ / ___ / ___ School / College.....

Which year group are you in? 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 Mentor's name:.....

Your Future Plans	Yes	No	Not sure
Go to sixth form / college (only applicable for years 7-11)			
Go to university / higher education (includes a degree or higher level / degree apprenticeship)			
Start work			
Start a traineeship or lower level apprenticeship			
Start voluntary work or work experience			
Do you currently have a specific career or job in mind?			
<i>If 'yes', please specify</i>			

Higher Education: Your current views	1= Definitely	2= Probably	3= Not Sure	4= Probably Not	5 = Definitely Not
I plan to go into university / higher education (e.g. degree or higher level / degree apprenticeship)	1	2	3	4	5
I know enough about university / higher education to decide	1	2	3	4	5
I understand how to apply to university / higher education	1	2	3	4	5
I know what qualifications / grades I would need to get in	1	2	3	4	5
I understand what life would be like at university / higher education	1	2	3	4	5
University / higher education is for people like me	1	2	3	4	5
Higher Education: Your concerns	1= Strongly Agree	2= Agree	3 = Not Sure	4= Disagree	5= Strongly disagree
I could not cope with the level of study at university / higher education	1	2	3	4	5
I will not get the exam grades I need to get in	1	2	3	4	5
I can't afford university / higher education and worry about debt	1	2	3	4	5
I would miss my family / friends / home	1	2	3	4	5
I live too far away to travel to University / higher education	1	2	3	4	5
Going to university / higher education will not improve my job prospects	1	2	3	4	5
I would prefer to find a job, apprenticeship or training	1	2	3	4	5
If you have any other worries about University / higher education, please specify here					

Life at school or college

With your mentor, discuss your responses to the questions over the page and use these to identify the areas you would most like help and support with. You can then use the balance wheel tool below to keep a record of your conversation.

This will help your mentor to plan what to cover in your mentoring sessions so that you get help in the areas where you need it most.

Using the balance wheel

Starting from the middle of the wheel, shade each section to reflect the amount of help or support you feel you need in that area. The closer to the edge of the circle you shade, the more support you would like.

How much help or support would you like with the following areas?

The balance wheel is a circular tool with eight segments, each representing a different area of support. The center is labeled "LESS SUPPORT" and the outer edge is labeled "MORE SUPPORT". The segments are:

- 1 - Exploring different careers
- 2 - Exploring higher education / university options
- 3 - Exploring other education / training options
- 4 - Improving my study, revision and exam skills
- 5 - Making the most of time at school / college
- 6 - Making the most of time outside school / college
- 7 - Developing my confidence / motivation to succeed
- 8 - Other?

Mentors: Please photocopy this assessment and give a copy to your university co-ordinator. Use the original to plan your mentoring sessions around the needs your learner has identified.

Ground Rules

Please complete this with your Learner and ensure that you have both agreed to the points listed below by signing at the bottom of this page.

The document can be re-visited during the relationship and the ground rules may be changed, if you both agree.

The ground rules that my Learner and I have agreed on are:

Signed (Mentor)

Signed (Learner or Group of Learners)

Date:

Ground Rules

Please complete this with your Learner and ensure that you have both agreed to the points listed below by signing at the bottom of this page.

The document can be re-visited during the relationship and the ground rules may be changed, if you both agree.

The ground rules that my Learner and I have agreed on are:

Signed (Mentor)

Signed (Learner or Group of Learners)

Date:



Session Details

Date : Time:

Location: Total length (Mins):

Learner Name/s:

Preparation for sessions

What is the aim for the session?
.....

What topics will we cover?
.....

What resources will I need to achieve these aims?
.....
.....

Session Notes

Mentor Self-Reflection

What Happened? What went well? What would I do differently?
.....
.....

What skills have I used during this session?.....
.....

Key points for next session

Date of next session Time.....

Location



Session Details

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Key points for next session

Date of next session Time.....

Location

Aimhigher Post-Mentoring Assessment 2016-17

This form asks about your future career aspirations, school life and knowledge of higher education and university. We need this information so your mentor can support you and to improve the work we do to help young people reach their full potential. At the end of your work with Aimhigher mentors you will be asked to answer these questions again, so we can see how mentoring has helped you. All information collected will be held confidentially. If you agree we will also use the information to track your future progress.

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Yes No

Your Details

First Name: Surname: Home Postcode

Gender: Female / Male Date of Birth: ___ / ___ / ___ School / College

Which year group are you in? 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 Mentor's name:

Your Future Plans	Yes	No	Not sure
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Go to university / higher education (includes a degree or higher level / degree apprenticeship)			
Start work			
Start a traineeship or lower level apprenticeship			
Start voluntary work or work experience			
Do you currently have a specific career or job in mind?			
If 'yes', please specify			

Higher Education: Your current views	1= Definitely	2= Probably	3= Not Sure	4= Probably Not	5= Definitely Not
I plan to go into university / higher education (e.g. degree or higher level / degree apprenticeship)	1	2	3	4	5
I know enough about university / higher education to decide	1	2	3	4	5
I understand how to apply to university / higher education	1	2	3	4	5
I know what qualifications / grades I would need to get in	1	2	3	4	5
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University / higher education is for people like me	1	2	3	4	5
Higher Education: Your concerns	1= Strongly Agree	2= Agree	3 = Not Sure	4= Disagree	5= Strongly disagree
I could not cope with the level of study at university / higher education	1	2	3	4	5
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If you have any other worries about University / higher education, please specify here					

Satisfaction with the Mentoring Scheme

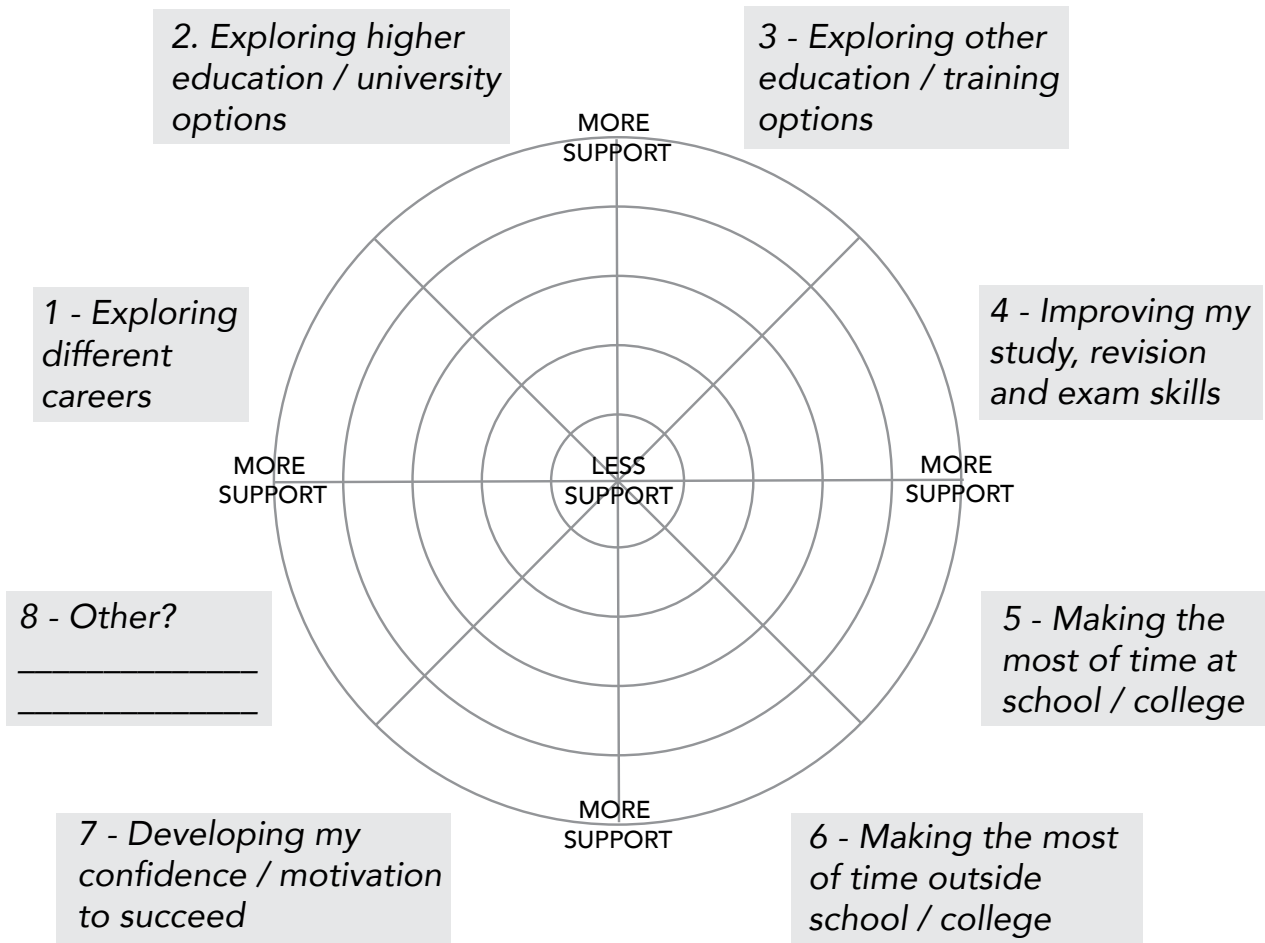
How satisfied are you with the support / guidance you have received from the mentoring scheme?

Very satisfied Satisfied Not Sure Dissatisfied Very Dissatisfied

Please provide an explanation for your answer? (e.g. what has worked well, has the scheme benefited you, do any improvements need to be made).

Post-Mentoring Balance Wheel

With your mentor, please complete the balance wheel below. Look at the balance wheel you filled in at the start of your mentoring. If your knowledge, skills and attitudes have improved your shaded areas should be much smaller, and closer to the centre of the wheel than they were at the start!



Mentors: Please photocopy this assessment and give a copy to your university co-ordinator.