

Setting ground rules: additional information

The mentor can open a discussion to explore what might be a possible set of ground rules for your mentoring sessions. The discussion must include ground rules for working together as a mentor and learner. Consideration can be given to what the differences, if any, might be.

The exercise you have done in setting ground rules in the training session is exactly the routine that we wish you to go through with your learner. However, certain ground rules must be included which the mentor has already been given (see ground rules section of the Mentor Logbook). These will include ground rules relating to disclosures and the non-exchange of personal contact details. It is important however that these are talked through with the learner so that the learner feels ownership of the rules rather than them being imposed. The mentor will need to ensure that an environment is created where the learner(s) feel comfortable enough to be able to speak about attitudes and behaviours they do not like. The mentor may also need to speak to the school co-ordinator to find out if there are any school “rules” that they may feel appropriate to be included. Mentors will need to re-visit their ground rules with the learners after the first few meetings to see if anything needs changing or adding. They are not set in stone and can be changed at any time. As the mentor/learner exchanges get underway an electronic communication method may be introduced. At this point it is important that again, the ground rules are re-visited to cover this type of exchange. The two ground rules given to mentors apply to all mentoring situations.

Explain to your learners why ground rules are essential and how they must be set early on in the relationship; ensure you allow your learners to speak and to have an opinion.