

CPD: Skills & Employability Development

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 and what you will might 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.

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.

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	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>

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	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.
IT skills	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.

	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.