



The Royal School of Mines Association

Mentoring Code of Conduct

Thank you for signing up for the Royal School of Mines Association's (RSMA) mentoring scheme. This is a scheme offered by the RSMA to students & graduates belonging to the Royal School of Mines Union (RSMU) and acts independently but in support of the mentoring provision by Imperial College London (ICL). In this scheme, mentors will be alumni of the Royal School of Mines (RSM), with mentees being current students and recent graduates. A code of conduct allows mentees and mentors simple guidelines and protocols for behaviour, a clear understanding of what is permitted and what isn't, and how best to deal with the issues or dilemmas that may arise having no clear-cut solutions. In so doing, both parties can ensure that the interaction remains professional, fair and help obviate any issues that may arise.

What is Mentoring?

Mentoring is a learning tool to support personal and professional development. It is a supportive, confidential, one-to-one relationship designed to build confidence and support the mentee to develop their goals.

Mentoring is not the same as training, teaching, or coaching and you do not need to be an expert in your mentees area of interest. A mentor is there to actively listen and ask questions that will challenge the mentee to identify actions they need to take to manage their own development. Imperial students involved in the scheme are looking for mentors to share information, knowledge and insights that have been gained through experience and support their learning and career growth.

The primary purpose is to drive personal growth, building skills, knowledge and understanding. Mentors may use coaching skills in their conversations; however, mentoring is also an opportunity to make connections and share experiences in a non-judgemental and safe environment. Approaching mentoring in this way will help the scheme's goal of increasing student prospects through greater understanding of career opportunities, the workplace and employer expectations.

Your Responsibilities

The onus is on both mentor and the mentee to be aware that their behaviour has the potential to negatively affect the mentoring relationship. Mentoring is a reciprocal relationship and requires for example active listening on behalf of the mentor to questions relayed by the mentee.

Expectations for the mentee include the following:

- Be proactive.
- Come with an agenda.
- Reflect on the mentoring sessions.
- Aim to integrate learning from each session.

Expectations for the mentor include the following:

- Actively listen.
- Ask exploratory questions.
- Challenge appropriately.
- Be empathetic.
- Respect the mentee's agenda.
- Provide shape and purpose in conversations.
- Have a genuine desire to support the mentee.

While there is no fixed structure for how to meet and how frequently to meet, the onus is on mentors and mentees to establish a suitable plan for the above suited to the mentoring needs of the mentee. As such different mentor/mentee pairs will likely have differing meetings over the course of the mentoring scheme. As a minimum three-four meetings are recommended for the mentorship pairs over the course of a twelve-month window, aligned to the academic year.

An example timeline: Meeting 1 = late October; Meeting 2 = late January; Meeting 3 = late May OR as needed

Confidentiality

Confidentiality is key for the mentoring relationship to succeed. All information received by the Mentor relating to the Mentee, organisation or other people is to be kept confidential with the exception of issues constituting a Mentee welfare concern. Information must not be relayed to co-workers or exploited for personal gain, unless the Mentor and Mentee both agree that it would be helpful to disclose relevant details to someone else who is better placed to advise.

Note: Please see RSMA Data Protection Statement and ICL GDPR guidelines for the appropriate handling of sensitive and personal data by mentors and/or mentees.

Boundary management & roles

Over the course of a mentoring programme, friendships may develop. It is imperative that during the mentoring relationship, clear boundaries are maintained between personal and professional advice, with caution exerted to avoid personal biases impacting the advice relayed. For mentors, please stay mindful of maintaining confidentiality (especially with regards to student information and commercial knowledge) and objectivity. The same also applies to mentees.

Liability

As a volunteer scheme involving alumni, some of whom will still be currently in employment, mentees can expect to receive advice on matters relating to job applications for example. Mentees must note that any advice given is not legally binding to either mentor or mentee. In the event information is relayed that constitutes an issue impacting the welfare of a student mentee, the mentor must direct the student to seek support from the appropriate mechanisms present in their department and at college level (such as the *departmental wellbeing advisor* and/or *senior tutors*). Mentors may relay this information to the mentoring coordinator for it to be passed on the appropriate persons who are in place at ICL to best support students.

Integrity

The mentoring scheme is a volunteer initiative of the RSMA and as such is contingent on the good faith engagement of both mentors and mentees. By signing up to this scheme, individuals agree to display integrity towards the opposing party. In practice, this means showing up to agreed upon meetings in a timely manner, being responsive in communication between mentor and mentee and following through on any commitments made. As part of this the onus is on mentors to self-assess their own competencies and experience, so that they may be best directed to those mentees who could benefit to what they have to offer. An induction kit will be made available to mentors upon signing up to the scheme, with key information such as support resources and provisions available through ICL.

By signing up to the mentoring initiative, mentors and mentees agree to conduct themselves in a professional manner.

Mutual Acceptance & Cessation

Having a mutually agreed upon cessation point for the mentoring cycle ensures a sense of closure for both parties. Ways to do this effectively can be through discussion of whether any previously established goals have been achieved and what development points are still in need of addressing. Mentors and mentees can agree upon how/if to keep in touch with the mentee provided guidance/structure in how to plan their own future development. While there is no strict timeframe

for this mentoring initiative, the community nature of the RSMA encourages mentees to engage proactively with the wider community in future if needed and seek further assistance, with the goal that as their careers progress themselves, mentees eventually become mentors.

NOTES:

Point of contact = RSMA Mentoring Coordinator (mentoring@rsma.org.uk)

When in doubt, please feel free to contact the RSMA Mentoring Coordinator with any queries related to the scheme as they are there to support all those involved in the scheme.

FAQs:

- What will the time commitment be?
 - Typically three-four in-person/online meetings are recommended between mentor and mentee in a twelve month period though this may vary depending on your needs.
- Will my mentor be chasing me up about meetings?
 - No, mentors are volunteers offering their time to help student mentees. As such the onus is on students to provide the drive for their meetings.
- Is any of this legally binding?
 - No, the RSMA Mentoring initiative is an informal system whereby volunteer alumni provide mostly their time and advice to current or recent graduates of the RSM.
- What if a mentee brings up a serious welfare issue?
 - Please inform the Mentoring Coordinator so that the issue can be redirected to the appropriate support mechanisms within the College.

Acknowledgements:

This document builds upon existing work by the ICL Careers team. We would like to thank them for their input. We would also like to thank key staff at the RSM for their input and feedback towards this document. This document was also guided by the following sources:

- [Mentoring at Imperial | Administration and support services | Imperial College London](#)
- [Code of conduct for mentoring | Professional Development | University of Southampton](#)
- [Mentoring - Code of Practice \(uhi.ac.uk\)](#)
- [ucl_mentoring_handbook_website.pdf](#)