

SBS-EMCRA Inter-Departmental Mentoring Scheme for Level A/B Research Fellows

Guide for Mentors

Your role (what is a mentor?)

The role of a mentor is to use the experience and knowledge you have gained during your career to both support and challenge your mentee in a way that promotes and fosters their career development and goals.

This may be achieved in different ways; however common themes are that a good mentor 'listens more, talks less' and 'asks the right/challenging questions' and empowers their mentee to solve their own problems.

What's in it for you (why be a mentor)?

1. **Pay-it-forward:** Reflect on your own career -- has there been someone that has helped you succeed? Supported you in a tough situation? Made you look at the tough situation differently? If so, consider this an opportunity to pay it forward.
2. **Self-interest:** The academic research environment has and is continuing to change rapidly. As an established senior academic, you may be more removed from the modern day-to-day challenges of the junior academic staff you supervise, and the newly established group leaders you work alongside. Mentoring can provide you with acute insight, and reduce the 'echo-chamber' phenomenon, resulting better leadership outcomes for you in your own role.

Expectations for you as a mentor

- Listen to your mentee
- Challenge your mentee's preconceived conceptions and assumptions of themselves and their career
- Help your mentee to find their own solutions to problems and encourage their confidence in making career choices
- Be open to sharing your own experiences and stories
- Uphold confidentiality
- Remember, mentoring is a discussion between two colleagues, not a dictatorial relationship

Advice for getting started

- Ask open-ended questions and take time to get to know each other
- Set mutually agreeably goals
- Consider other activities eg. CV check, job shadowing, 'sitting in' on a meeting