

# WOMEN RESEARCHERS MENTORING SCHEME (WRMS)

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### 1. Do I need to have experience of mentoring in order to be a WRMS Mentor?

No previous experience is needed and all new mentors receive training by attending a half day workshop.

### 2. What is the time commitment for being a mentor?

It is expected that mentoring meetings will take place once every six to eight weeks over a ten to twelve month period. A minimum of four one-hour long meetings would take place over the course of the mentoring relationship. However, specific arrangements for meetings are left to the discretion of the individual pair and more meetings may take place if it is mutually felt to be necessary. In addition, you are encouraged to attend a workshop and allocate some time for providing feedback to help us monitor the success and impact of the scheme.

### 3. Is being a mentor recognised in my workload bundles?

Six WLBs are available to each mentor over the course of the mentoring cycle.

### 4. Can I be a mentor for a junior member of staff in my own department?

Yes, however, you cannot be their line manager.

### 5. Can I take part in the scheme if I am a PhD/DPhil/Prof Doc student as well as a staff member?

No we do not match up doctoral students as you receive supervision as part of your doctoral process.

### 6. Can I take part in the scheme if I am within one year of starting my job at UWE?

No we do not match up people on probation as you receive mentoring as part of your UWE induction.

### 7. What is the time commitment for being a mentee?

It is expected that mentoring meetings will take place once every six to eight weeks over a ten to twelve month period. A minimum of four one hour long meetings would take place over the course of the mentoring relationship. However, specific arrangements for meetings are left to the discretion of the individual pair and more meetings may take place if it is mutually felt to be necessary. In addition, you are expected to attend a half-day workshop session and allocate some time for providing feedback to help us monitor the success and impact of the scheme. There will also be opportunities for all participants to attend at least one event a year to share experiences.

The WRMS mentoring scheme operates on a 'mentee-led' basis. This means that whilst a mentor can provide support, guidance and encouragement which, if followed, may assist career progression, the mentor cannot do the work on behalf of the mentee. **This means that the mentee is responsible for initiating mentoring meetings.**

### 8. What is the time period for the mentoring relationship?

The mentoring relationships run from March to the following February. This is to allow matched pairs to meet during a period when teaching loads are commonly lower, allowing mentees to utilise their research time and plan deliverables.

### 9. Do I have to tell my line manager that I have a mentor?

Yes, as you will need to have their full approval in order to take part in the scheme.

### 10. Are discussions between the mentor and the mentee confidential?

Yes, they are.

### 11. Is there a time limit for the mentor-mentee relationship?

Yes. The mentoring relationship is expected to last for ten to twelve months (running from March to the following February), however if either or both parties decide to terminate the relationship early

this is fine but we do request they notify the Scheme Coordinator. If after the 12 month mentoring relationship there is a desire to continue you must contact the Scheme Coordinator who will advise whether this is possible as part of the mentoring scheme.

#### **12. How will the mentors and mentees be paired up?**

The WRMS Coordinator and a Matching Panel assess applications to determine whether a suitable mentor/mentee match can be made.

In determining mentor/mentee pairings the onus will be placed on the similarity of the mentor's expertise and experience with the stated career aspirations of the mentee. It is important that we gain as much information as possible on each applicant and his or her reasons for applying to the scheme in order to enable us to make the most suitable mentor/mentee pairing. Therefore, we welcome as much detail as possible on the application form.

#### **13. What if you can't find a suitable match?**

The WRMS team will strive to match everybody that applies, providing they meet the eligibility criteria. Again providing as much information as possible on the application form will help us to do this.

#### **14. Can I choose my mentor/mentee?**

Mentees will be able to suggest whether they prefer a Mentor from the same area/discipline in the application form, however, the Matching Panel cannot guarantee accommodating individually named suggestions. All matching will be done on the basis of the Mentors' and Mentees' profiles and experience.

#### **15. What if I can't attend a scheduled workshop session?**

The half-day workshop run by the scheme is compulsory for all mentees and mentors new to the scheme and strongly encouraged for those mentors who have been involved in the scheme in previous years in order to share best practice. The workshop aims to help mentors enhance their mentoring practice and reflect on the value of their role. The workshop aims to introduce mentees to the scheme and outline expectations. In addition, this is a vital opportunity for all those participating in the scheme to network with each other, learn about the importance of women progressing in research roles and the support available, and share experiences and ideas. As part of your application you will be asked to identify which workshop you would like to attend. We look forward to seeing you there!

#### **16. Why is the scheme only offered to women?**

There is an under-representation of women in senior levels at UWE. More men than women were submitted in the REF 2014. The statistical under-representation of women in many universities can lead to women employees feeling isolated in male-orientated work environments. The Women Researchers Mentoring Scheme has been developed to address these inequalities and bring about positive change.

#### **17. Can men take part in this scheme?**

Experienced researchers, men and women, are encouraged to apply as **mentors**. However, the scheme is intended to provide support for women researchers therefore men are not eligible to apply as mentees.

#### **18. Where should I carry out my mentoring meetings?**

This topic will be covered in the workshop sessions but if you would like to book a meeting room you can book rooms on all UWE campuses via the Central Room Bookings team -

<https://intranet.uwe.ac.uk/tasks-guides/task/Room-bookings>

#### **19. Where do I go for further information and advice?**

Further information is in the mentoring handbook and you can also contact the Scheme Coordinator Fiona Watt on extension 81374 or email [fiona.watt@uwe.ac.uk](mailto:fiona.watt@uwe.ac.uk).