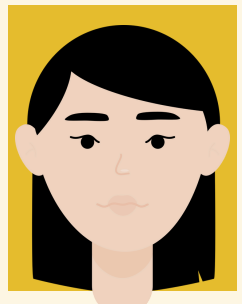
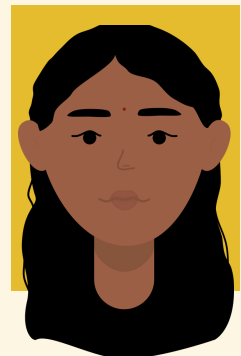
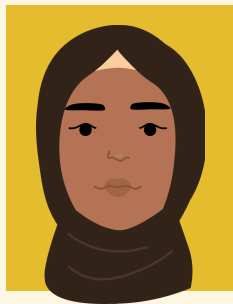
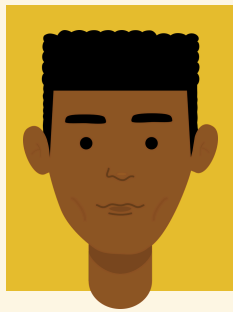


# MENTORING HANDBOOK

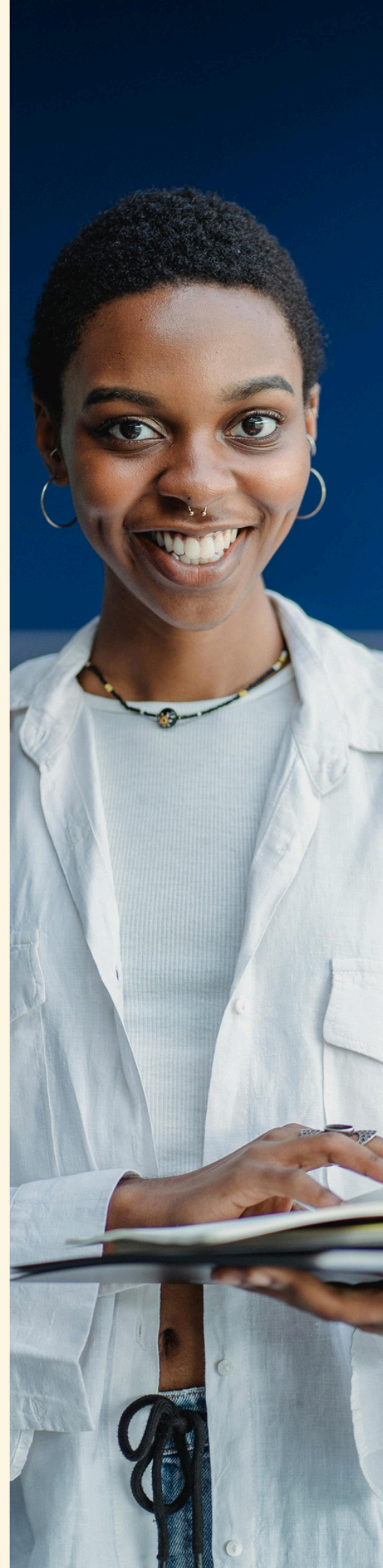


A GUIDE FOR MENTORS & MENTEES  
CLASS OF 2026

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*For any further guidance or questions about the mentorship scheme, please email the mentorship team: [mentoring@attheheartuk.org](mailto:mentoring@attheheartuk.org)*





*Welcome to the At The Heart Mentorship Scheme!*

Mentoring provides many personal, social and professional benefits to both the mentor and the mentee. This mentoring scheme is focused on bringing together individuals with an interest in personal development and social mobility.

This handbook provides an overview of the programme and guidance on how to get the most out of it. We recommend you review this handbook before your first session and revisit it as often as you can. We hope that this handbook will help you navigate your mentoring relationship in a structured and effective manner.

On our website, you can also find resources, including proposed agendas for mentoring sessions and other worksheets that can help you to fulfil your role as a mentor/mentee. We're always here if you've got a question or if you want to tell us what you've been up to.

At any point during the scheme, you are welcome to contact us at [mentoring@attheheartuk.org](mailto:mentoring@attheheartuk.org) to ask for advice, voice a concern or simply tell us how you feel your mentoring relationship is going.

We thank you for taking part in the programme, and wish you a fulfilling experience.

Regards,



## ABOUT US

At the Heart is a charity that aims to support young adults living in London and from predominantly black and other ethnic minority groups. We aim to provide them with practical, financial and social opportunities - helping them find their place and become valued contributors to society.

We champion the development and wellbeing of young people within our communities, supporting them to make positive strides towards their aspirations, achieve their goals and develop key life skills - ultimately helping them to take progressive steps towards a better future.

Our mentorship scheme is a key part of At The Heart's mission. Young adults from racialised and other disadvantaged groups need mentors who can offer advice, challenge, motivate and encourage them to lead happy and successful lives.



# MENTORSHIP SCHEME OVERVIEW



## Objectives of the Programme

The 'At The Heart' Mentorship Scheme was developed with the main objectives of wanting to:

- Provide young adults with an opportunity to tap into a direct source of experience and knowledge
- Empower young adults to make better life choices
- Support young adults to approach new opportunities and challenges with self-confidence and drive
- Support young adults to be able to formulate a clear sense of personal direction



# 01



# 02

## Why Mentoring?

Why is it important? Our mentorship scheme aims to provide mentees with the opportunity to tap into a direct source of experience and knowledge and offer them support with formulating a clear sense of personal direction so that they can approach new opportunities and challenges with self-confidence and drive.

Mentoring is a tool used to support personal development. It is an on-going relationship designed to help mentees learn new skills and knowledge from the expertise of their mentor.

It provides an informal space for mentors to support a mentee's work towards personal, social or career goals, as well as providing the opportunity for them to identify practical ways for a mentee to overcome barriers and personal challenges that may be in the way of goal attainment.

That being said, mentoring is a two way relationship - both mentor and mentee should get the chance to learn new things and experience some personal development.



# 03

## What is Mentoring?

# MENTORING VS COACHING

MENTORING	COACHING
<p>Usually an organised pairing where a more skilled or experienced person is matched with a less experienced person</p> <p>Helps mentees to develop their skills and knowledge by drawing upon the expertise and experience of the mentor</p> <p>Mentors will provide direction and advice to mentees</p> <p>Builds mentees capabilities by creating a partnership</p> <p>Development driven</p> <p>Fluid and goal-orientated</p>	<p>Coaches do not need to have any expertise in the area that the client is seeking coaching for</p> <p>Helps mentees to develop insights that help them to work or learn more effectively</p> <p>Coaches will ask thought- provoking questions but will not give any advice</p> <p>Is task and performance focused; usually requires formal evaluation</p> <p>Performance Driven</p> <p>Specific Structure</p>

# THE BENEFITS OF MENTORING



**As a mentor** with At The Heart, you will be able to develop a broad range of transferable skills, from problem-solving and time-management to communication, teamwork and leadership.

You will be able to have a real impact on the lives of young adults from Black and other ethnic minority groups.

**As a mentee**, you will be provided with the opportunity to tap into a direct source of experience and knowledge.

You will be supported to formulate a clear sense of personal direction and approach new opportunities and challenges with self-confidence and drive.



Learn to be a leader



Gain satisfaction from seeing others develop



Develop a range of transferable skills

*i.e. communication, problem-solving etc.*



Support someone else to build excellence and character



Gain a sense of purpose and fulfilment  
Influence someone else to accomplish their goals and objectives

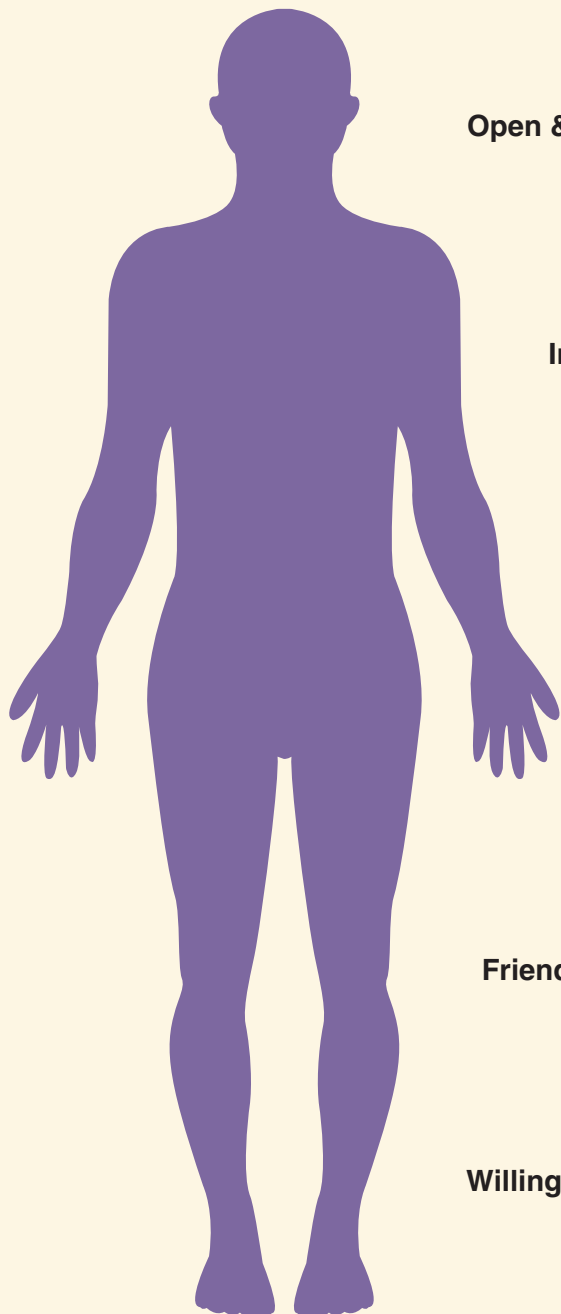


Leave a legacy and make a lasting impact on someone else's life

## Why Mentoring?

- It allows for flexibility
- Contact does not always need to be fixed or scheduled
- Each mentoring relationship is individual and unique
- It is centred around the needs of the mentee
- It is a great tool to enhance and embed learning through feedback
- Complements other methods of learning

# ROLES & EXPECTATIONS



Patient

Willing to connect & network

Willing to share, advise and teach

Respectful

Active Listener

Non-judgemental

Open & honest

Supportive

Empathetic

Invested

Sincere & shows integrity

Committed

Inspires trust

Approachable

Clear communicator

Encourages independence

Reflective

Co-operative

Friendly

Prepared to give time & energy

Knowledgeable

Willing to learn

Enthusiastic

Motivating

Open to learn

Self-aware

Readily able to adapt

Intentional

## Mentors are expected to...

Listen to their mentee

Assist with practical tips and identify areas for development and improvement of self-confidence

Offer alternative perspectives

Draw on own experiences where appropriate

Share helpful information, knowledge and resources

Offer advice, support and encouragement

Take the lead in the early stages of the relationship

Provide mentee with an insight in to their own work and achievements

Encourage reflection; recognise and celebrate achievements

Develop understanding and provide mentee with support and problem-solving skills

Review experiences

Identify objectives

Provide feedback

Identify strengths and achievements

Identify areas of development

Discuss personal, professional and/or academic issues

Agree support needs

Set targets for future actions

Create opportunities for mentees to gain experience

### Mentors are **NOT** expected to...

- Provide counselling
- Provide training
- Sort out all the mentee's problems

# GETTING STARTED

## The Relationship

There are various ways that a mentor and mentee may wish to approach their mentoring relationship.

...Perhaps the mentee knows exactly how the mentor can support them and is able to take the lead when coming up with a mentoring plan.

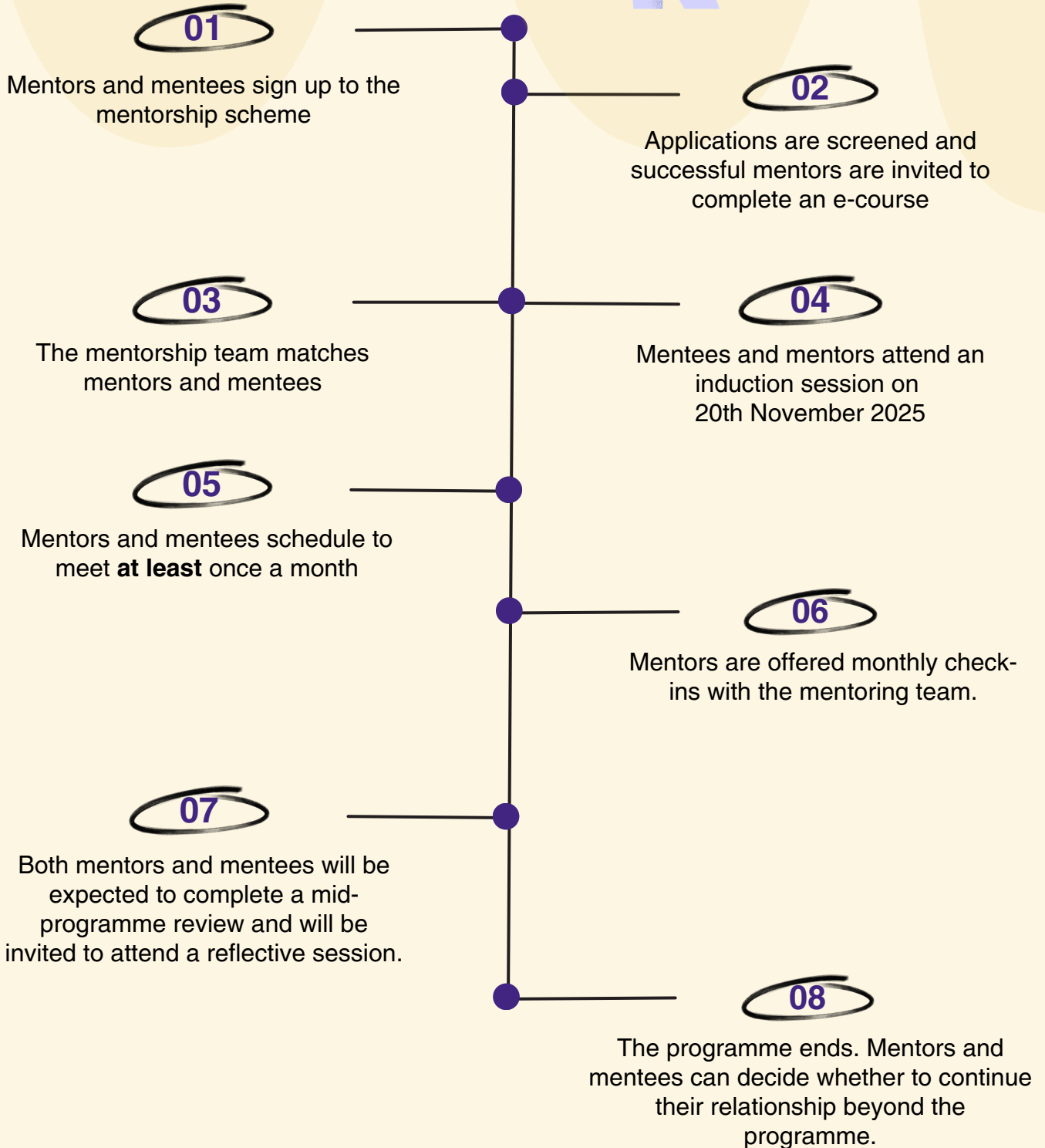
...Perhaps the mentee needs support to think about appropriate mentoring goals so that they can create a set plan together.

...Perhaps you both prefer a structured approach as opposed to a more spontaneous one, or vice versa.

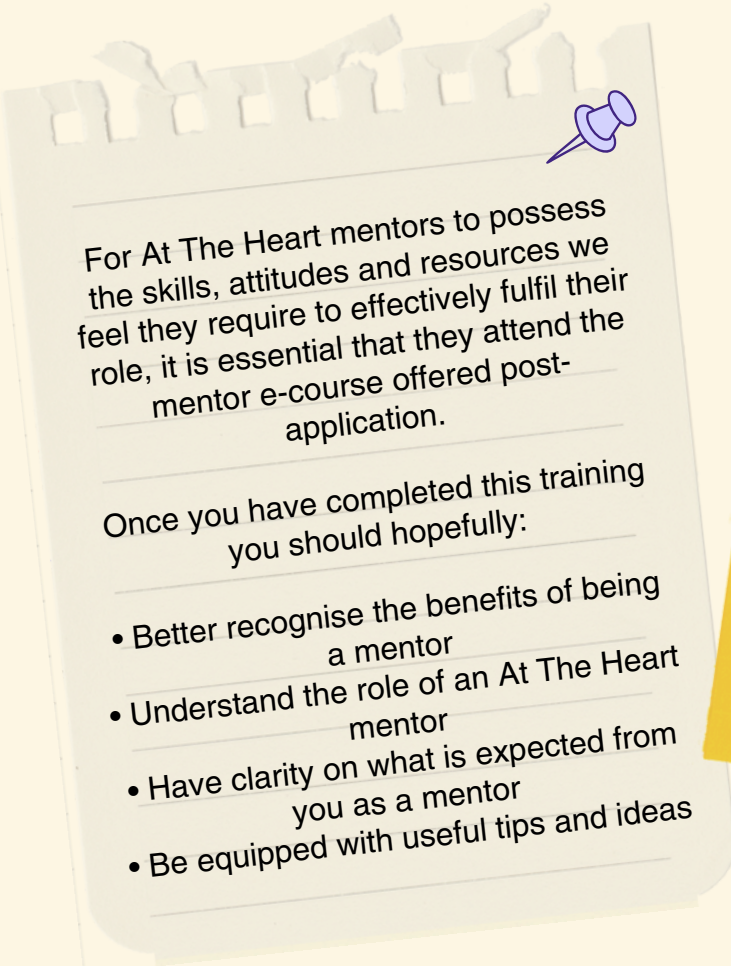
Each mentoring relationship is unique and there is no right mentoring formula, but it is important that you start your mentoring relationship by: getting to know one another, communicating expectations and preferences and deciding what works best for both of you.



# THE MENTORING JOURNEY



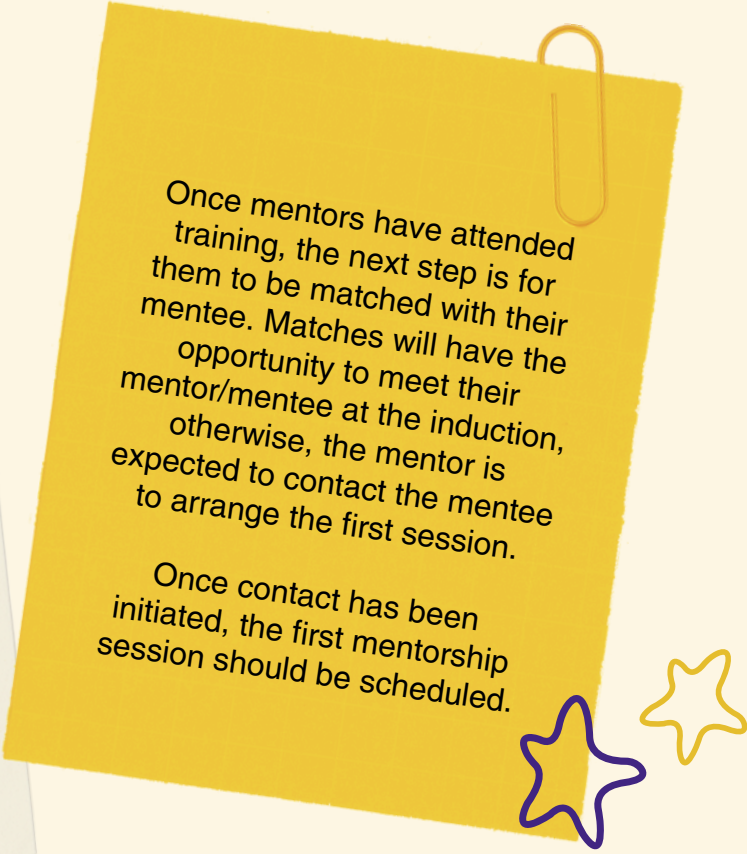
# THE MENTORING TIMELINE: PREPARATION



For At The Heart mentors to possess the skills, attitudes and resources we feel they require to effectively fulfil their role, it is essential that they attend the mentor e-course offered post-application.

Once you have completed this training you should hopefully:

- Better recognise the benefits of being a mentor
- Understand the role of an At The Heart mentor
- Have clarity on what is expected from you as a mentor
- Be equipped with useful tips and ideas



Once mentors have attended training, the next step is for them to be matched with their mentee. Matches will have the opportunity to meet their mentor/mentee at the induction, otherwise, the mentor is expected to contact the mentee to arrange the first session.

Once contact has been initiated, the first mentorship session should be scheduled.



## Building Relationships & Establishing Expectations

Once you've been matched, it is important to think about what you want to bring to and to gain from the mentoring relationship.

Think about the kind of mentoring relationship you want to foster.

# Establishing & Maintaining Boundaries

Establishing and maintaining boundaries is a very important part of building an effective mentoring relationship. For boundaries to be effective they need to be applied on a consistent and on-going basis.

When boundaries are too loose, it's easy for them to be misinterpreted, and when they are too rigid, they can also incapacitate the relationship.

You should decide which boundaries are important to you before meeting with your mentee so that you can put 'rules' in place to help you maintain them when you and your mentee first meet.

## Some questions that a mentor may want to ask themselves:

How much time do I feel comfortable spending with my mentee on a regular basis?

How late is too late to receive a phone call (or too early)? Does communication require an appointment?

What would I do if my mentee does not show up for a session?

How would I respond if my mentee asks me about personal issues?

Where do I draw the line when it comes to discussing my own personal experiences?

What would I do if my mentee uses inappropriate language or is disrespectful during one of our sessions?



## Prior to the first session, both the mentor and the mentee should prepare for the first session by also considering their own expectations, goals and what they want out of the relationship:

What will you need to do in order to make session one effective?

What does the other party need to know about you and what do you want to know about them?

Consider how much time you can spare for sessions and make a time commitment in your diary – a minimum of 1 hour a month is expected

Think about your preferred communication style



# The Introductory Meeting (Session One)

We recommend that at least an hour and a half is allocated for the first session, to allow sufficient time for everything that we'd expect you to cover.

**Don't Forget!** You will need to email the Mentorship Team and let them know the date of the first session by 31 December 2025.



## File Edit View Help

The first session is important because it aims to set the tone of the mentoring relationship. Despite the expectation that the mentee will dictate the direction of the mentoring relationship, the mentor is expected to guide the process. Having a successful first session is likely to set the foundation for the rest of the mentoring sessions.

That being said, it takes time to build any relationship, so if things don't go too smoothly in session one, don't panic! Things are likely to get easier the more you meet over time. If you are worried about anything after the first session, don't forget that you can access the forum or contact the mentorship team.

The focus of the first session should be introductions and goal setting. This is an opportunity to get to know each other and develop a rapport, as well as ensure you are aware of each other's expectations and boundaries.

Building trust from the very start of your mentoring relationship is also a key component for an effective one. To build trust, it is important to:

- Be open and honest
- Be respectful at all times
- Be accountable for your actions or in-action
- Be transparent and consistent Be accessible & consistent
- Be flexible
- Share your personal thoughts
- Stick to any commitments made

### **Goals & Objectives**

During the first session, it would also be helpful to start to think about the goals and objectives for the mentoring relationship based on the mentee's needs. Mentors can set the mentee a task before the next session to help initiate this process. Visit the "[Session One Guide](#)" for suggestions on what to cover.

## Creating a Mentorship Plan (Session Two)

Once you have gotten to know each other and have set some expectations for the mentoring relationship, you can work together to develop an action plan for the six-month mentoring period.

The focus of the second session (if not completed in the first session) should be to set goals and objectives for the mentoring relationship based on the mentee's needs.

*Together you should think about the mentee's ambitions and goals in relation to the following areas:*

Issues being faced and how to address them

Achievements so far and how to build on them

Priorities and areas of further development

Areas of input that the mentee will find most useful

Hopefully the mentee will have thoughts about this already or completed the task(s) set at the end of session one to guide this discussion, but perhaps also think about the following:

What does the mentee hope to accomplish in the next 6 months, 1 year, 3 years?

What would help the mentee achieve their goals?

Are the goals SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, Time-Bound)?

After the goals have been set, make sure to also discuss how you can start to work towards them together: Discuss approaches, methods, techniques etc. to achieve goals and objectives; think about the mentee's personal strengths and weaknesses; Identify opportunities to develop skills.

## Mentoring Agreement

Once goals have been set and both parties have agreed to move forward with the mentoring relationship\*, a Mentoring Agreement will need to be signed. This should be drafted together before the end of the second session.

Why not use the "[Mentoring Agreement Example](#)" to help you with this? Contact the mentorship team at [mentoring@attheheartuk.org](mailto:mentoring@attheheartuk.org) if you have any questions about creating a mentoring agreement.

*Please ensure that you have also read and understood the [Mentoring Code of Conduct](#).*

\*If by the end of this session, for whatever reason, it is felt by either party that they are not suited for the mentoring relationship, the mentorship team will explore the possibility of rematching you.



## Regular Meetings and Revision of Action Plan (Session Three Onwards)

It will be up to you both to decide how often you will have structured sessions and how long these sessions will be. This is something that you can decide during the initial session, but at times you may find that adjustments need to be made based on mentee needs, or specific plans that you may have for certain sessions.

**Structured Session** - planned in advance with a set agenda/structure.

**Non-Structured Session** - impromptu, as and when needed, may be delivered through less formal channels (i.e. text, WhatsApp, email etc.)

Do remember that the guidance is to commit at least one hour per month for structured sessions. As the mentorship scheme is a six-month programme, so you will be expected to have a minimum of six mentoring sessions together.

- Set an agenda
- Review actions/goals from the previous session
- Evaluate progress and/or problem solve; and
- Set actions/goals for the next session

We would recommend 60-90 minutes for each structured session, but some may require more/less time depending on goals and/or the agenda set.

You can use the [Mentoring Meeting Record](#) to help you to plan/structure each session.



# Programme Reviews



## Mid-Programme Review

Three-months into your mentoring relationship, both mentors and mentees will be expected to complete an online review.

This is an opportunity for you to think about what is going well, areas for improvement and whether you require any additional support at that stage.

You will be sent an email by the mentorship scheme with a link to the review. As part of the mentoring programme, you are required to complete the review by the deadline given.

Although you are welcome to contact the At the Heart Mentorship Team for guidance or support at any time, this is a formal check-point that allows for us to see how both parties are getting on. You will also be invited to a group reflective session for an opportunity to think about your own development and areas for improvement.

## End of Mentoring Review

At the six-month point, both mentors and mentees are expected to complete a second online review. Again, you will be emailed a link to access the review and are required to complete the survey by the deadline given.

The six-month review is another opportunity for you to think about what has been going well, areas for further improvement and next steps. This is a chance to review the initial objectives and the progress made so far, celebrate achievements and highlight learning points.

You are also welcome to share feedback with the mentorship team by emailing [mentoring@attheheartuk.org](mailto:mentoring@attheheartuk.org) so that we can continue to develop the programme.

## Looking Ahead



Once you have completed your six-month review, you will be expected to schedule a “final” session.

During this session, it would be helpful to explore the outcome of the review with your mentee/mentor and think about whether to terminate or continue with your mentoring relationship.

*Mentors* are encouraged to ask mentees for feedback in the final session:

- How useful have our sessions been and what in particular have you found helpful?
- What would you have liked me to do differently (what would you have liked me to do more/less of?)
- Are you doing/do you plan to do anything differently going forward based on our sessions?

**Mentors:** Remember to consider your own time and resources, whether the mentee has reached their goals, and what you would like the mentoring relationship to look like moving forward if you agree to continue to mentor that mentee.

Please note, that after the programme has ended, if you agree with your mentee to continue the mentoring relationship, it will be independent of the At The Heart mentoring scheme.

At this stage, you are welcome to continue using the resources provided, but you will no longer be supported by the At The Heart Mentorship Team or be covered by any of our organisational policies.



If you do decide to terminate the mentoring relationship, be open and honest with one another regardless of the reason for the termination, talk about the reasons for ending the relationship and both parties should talk about their thoughts and feelings about the mentorship relationship and the termination.

*You may still wish to keep in touch - i.e. sending an email when you have news to share.*

# RESOURCES

Mentors are expected to plan and lead the first two sessions.

Although mentees will eventually be expected to take the lead in sessions, mentors will be expected to support them with planning/agenda setting.

You can find templates, guides and tools on the [Mentorship Scheme Resources](#) page of the website. All resources are optional, but we encourage both mentors and mentees to look through what's available before getting started.

Don't forget that you can also use the group reflective session to share ideas and resources not provided by the programme.

We hope you've found this handbook to be helpful. Don't forget to spread the word and invite other people you know to serve as mentors in the future.



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**Document orientation:** Portrait

Copies of this booklet can be downloaded at no cost from:

[www.attheheartuk.org/mentorship-scheme](http://www.attheheartuk.org/mentorship-scheme)

If you would like to tell us what you think about this handbook, please get in touch.

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**Website:** [www.attheheartuk.org](http://www.attheheartuk.org)

**Email:** [info@attheheartuk.org](mailto:info@attheheartuk.org)

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