

# MENTORING SCHEME

## School of Mathematical and Physical Sciences

The School offers to all of its staff the possibility to be mentored by staff other than their line managers. This new and improved mentoring system will allow you to get impartial advice and support from someone other than your line manager. The School values its staff across all the roles and recognises that without committed, motivated and pro-active people, our objectives cannot be met. As such we believe in supporting you in the best way possible, and one way to do this is to ensure that every member of staff has the opportunity to interact with a mentor, providing impartial advice, and a friendly ear away from the line management structure and PDR system.

### General Principles:

*A mentor should be available for all staff*

Mentoring is usually a planned pairing of a more skilled or experienced person with a less experienced person. Ideally mentors should have no line-management connection with their mentee such that they have no agenda other than assisting their mentees in their development and to reach their goals. Mentors will often provide advice and make suggestions, including drawing on their own experiences. Mentors will often provide opportunities/contacts/networks for their mentee.

*There are different types of mentoring*

Some people like to develop a long term mentoring arrangement with an individual, meeting periodically over a few years. Others have a variety of mentors with different specialisms. Examples might include work-life balance, career development, teaching development, leadership and management, etc.

*Mentoring should be a valuable experience, not a tick-box exercise.*

We propose to offer two types of mentoring in MPS:

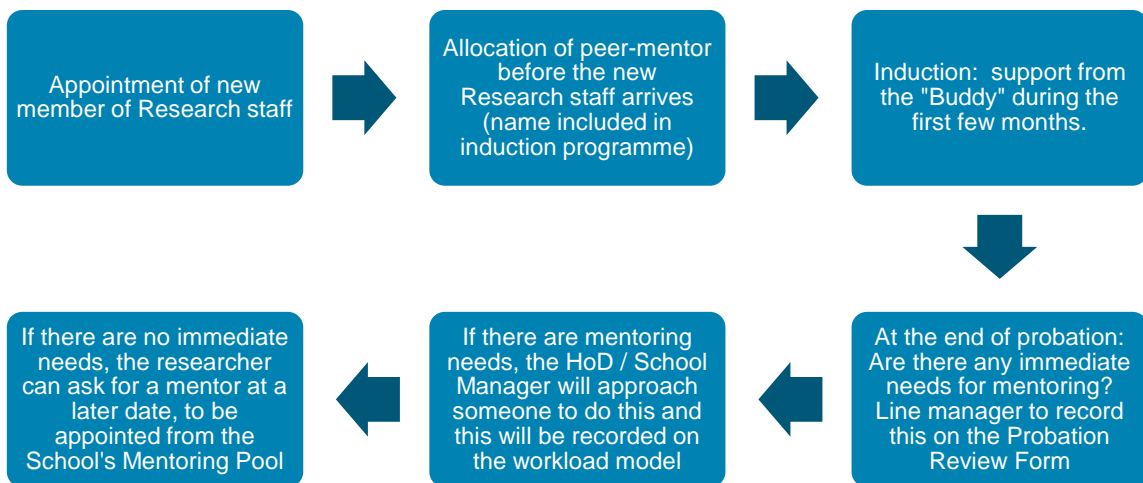
### 1. Start-up mentoring:

All new staff will have a mentor for the first 6 months of their new position. This will work as follows for the different categories of staff:

#### a) "Peer mentoring" for all new research staff members:

Prior to their arrival all new staff members are assigned a peer mentor (currently known as the "Buddy scheme" in the Department of Meteorology). At their induction, staff members are made aware of the School's Mentoring arrangements and encouraged to consider this throughout their probation. At the end of the probation period, a conversation will happen between the new research staff member and their line manager, to discuss whether there are any immediate additional mentoring needs, and if so, a mentor will be approached either by the staff member themselves or by emailing [smo-](#)

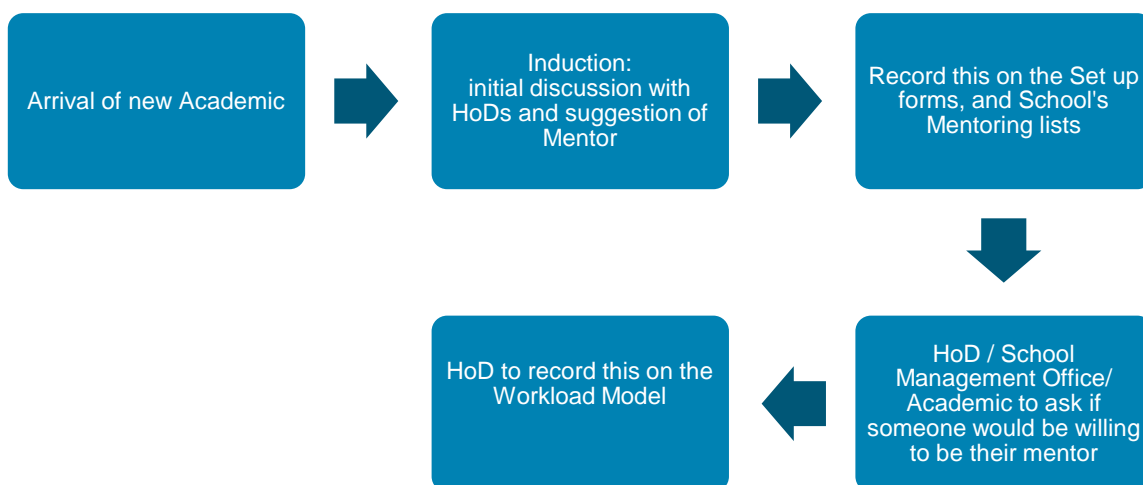
[smps@reading.ac.uk](mailto:smps@reading.ac.uk) or the relevant Head of Department. This should be recorded on the Probation Review Form and be included in the School's list of mentors and on the Workload model.



**b) For all new Academic Staff:**

For all new Lecturers, the allocation of a mentor is part of their APP training and therefore this should be arranged with the HoD at their start. This will be recorded on their Set up forms and included in the School's Mentoring lists and Workload models. Either they, the Head of Department or School Management Office can ask the mentor if they agree to do this.

For all senior appointments, the mentoring can be arranged as part of their induction meetings, and recorded in the Academic Set Up forms, and included in the School's Mentoring lists and Workload models. Either they, the Head of Department or School Management Office can ask the mentor if they agree to do this.



### **c) For all operational support staff (Grades 1-5, including administrative and technical staff)**

All new and existing operational support staff should discuss mentoring as part of their induction meeting with their Line Manager, or during their PDR. Alternatively, staff may decide that having a mentor would be useful to them at particular stages in their employment, and they should discuss this with their line manager. They, their line manager or School Management Office can ask the mentor if they agree to do this. This should be recorded on the School's Mentoring lists.

### **d) For all Professional and Managerial staff**

All Professional and Managerial staff should discuss mentoring with their Line Manager at the start of their employment or during their PDR. If they feel that this would be useful to them, they should approach the Head of Department/Unit who will arrange mentoring for this group of staff, following the discussion with the Line Manager. This should be recorded on the School's Mentoring lists.

## **2. Staff in post: Mentoring pool**

Most staff will recognise that others have had an impact on their careers, either informally or else as mentors at different times of their careers / lives. The opportunity to voice your concerns, doubts or other feelings and getting support and advice from a senior person may have made all the difference to you having the confidence to achieve something. As the context of these conversations can vary, you can request a mentor from the School's Mentoring pool, either continuously or at a given time when it is needed. Those doing PDRs with their line managers might benefit from having a mentor to have another point of view or a confidential discussion. Mentoring can be discussed during the PDR and the Line Manager might be able to suggest a suitable mentor, or you could apply for a mentor from the Mentoring pool.

You can have different mentors for different activities, if necessary. Specific issues where mentoring could be useful include providing advice or feedback and support to plan for:

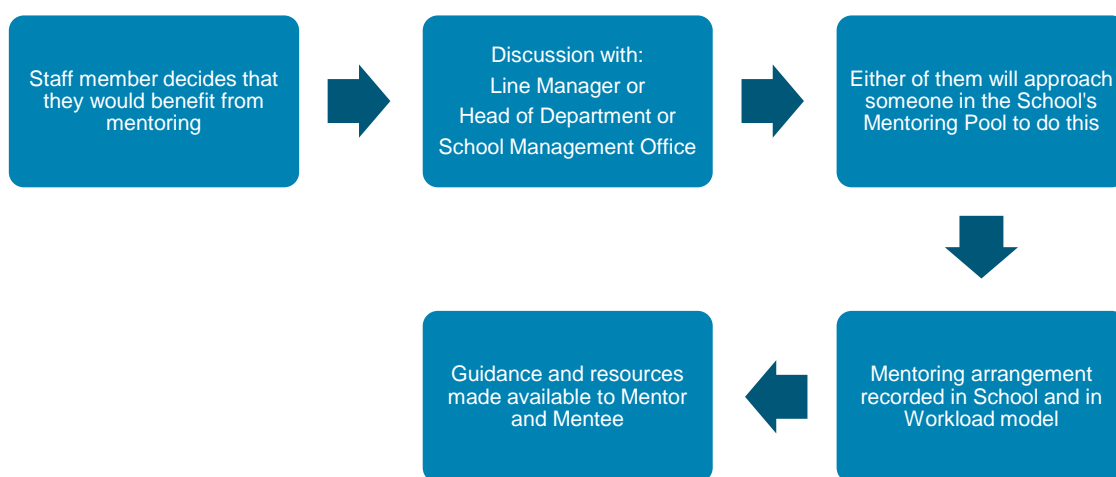
- Career development: Getting a promotion, applying for a fellowship;
- Support and advice in identifying and planning personal and professional development, or at key transition points;
- Work-life balance and family events (returning from secondments, Maternity or Parental Leave, or career breaks);
- Research group development;
- Working with industry or across Schools;
- Fieldwork;
- Outreach, social media or media work;
- Applying for a job, CV surgery;
- Equality and Diversity;
- Skills related mentoring (developing new skills, communication, working with others);
- A second opinion or sounding board for ideas;
- Considering or fulfilling Leadership and Management roles;
- Working effectively in support or administrative roles;
- Gaining access to networks or contacts.

For specific activities such as support towards writing grant proposals, or applying for a fellowship or promotion, you are advised to talk to both your line manager and the Head of Department beforehand, to make sure that your mentor will have all the skills and experience required to give you the support you need towards these activities. Your line manager and Head of Department should be able to advise on this more specifically.

If you would like to offer mentoring to your colleagues, please email [smo-smmps@reading.ac.uk](mailto:smo-smmps@reading.ac.uk) to let us know, along with the areas you might like to offer support for. Mentoring is an activity which will be recorded in the Academic Workload model. You can restrict your offer to do this for a number of hours only.

### **What is the mechanism to apply for a mentor for existing staff:**

You should discuss this with your Line Managers first. The request for a mentor from the Mentoring pool, can be made either via the relevant Head of Department/Unit or by emailing [smo-smmps@reading.ac.uk](mailto:smo-smmps@reading.ac.uk).



### **What are the resources in place to support those in mentoring (either mentor or mentee):**

Guidance for both the mentee and mentor can be found in the Meteorology or Maths & Stats internal libraries:

- A Henley Approach to Best Practice by Jane Cranwell-Ward, Patricia Bossons, Sue Gover
- Time to Think: Listening to Ignite the Human Mind by Nancy Kline
- Coaching Skills for Leaders in the Workplace Paperback by Jackie Arnold
- Coaching for Performance: GROWing Human Potential and Purpose - the Principles and Practice of Coaching and Leadership by John Whitmore

Other online resources can be found at:

- [VITAE website \(for research staff\)](#) – see the Vitae Researcher Development Framework
- [http://www.cipd.co.uk/hr-resources/factsheets/coaching-mentoring.aspx#link\\_2](http://www.cipd.co.uk/hr-resources/factsheets/coaching-mentoring.aspx#link_2)
- <http://www.mentorset.org.uk/pages/mentoring.htm>
- [http://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newLDR\\_89.htm](http://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newLDR_89.htm)

Please email [smo-smpls@reading.ac.uk](mailto:smo-smpls@reading.ac.uk) if you have any questions about this or to register your current mentoring arrangements on the School's Mentoring lists.