



# Becoming a CPD Mentor

Last updated May 2006

See also:     Choosing a CPD Mentor  
                  Mentoring and the BAA CPD scheme  
                  The BAA CPD scheme

## **Purpose of this document**

If you have been asked to act as a Mentor by a registrant of the BAA CPD scheme, this document should help you to reach your decision. You should not become someone's Mentor without first reading this document. It outlines what is and isn't involved and it suggests what ground rules you and your potential Mentee should agree from the outset. It does not tell you how to act as a Mentor – a separate document covers the mentoring process.

## **Mentoring**

A process where one person (the Mentor) offers guidance and support to facilitate learning or development of another person (the Mentee) in the progression and maintenance of their career. An effective Mentor may provide guidance and interpret complex information on technical and managerial issues. One role of a Mentor is to provide a different perspective so that the Mentee may compare and contrast their decisions and goals against a broader picture. Having a Mentor is encouraged, but is not compulsory within the BAA CPD scheme.

## **Who should be a Mentor**

There are no firm rules for who should be a Mentor. The Mentor and Mentee need to be confident and secure in their relationship in order for it to be successful.

As a Mentor, you:

- do not need to be a member of your Mentee's department
- do not need to be a member of BAA
- do not need to be an Audiological professional
- do need to know the Mentee well enough to know that you "get on"
- must have a reasonably detailed knowledge of what your Mentee's job entails
- need to be able to meet your Mentee: this requires you make time available and to be geographically accessible
- are expected to assist your Mentee in meeting the CPD requirements of the Health Professions Council (HPC)
- must understand that mentoring sessions **are not** performance reviews or appraisals, though conclusions and decisions from those are likely to feed into the mentoring process
- are expected to be on your Mentor's side, be their advocate, their sounding board.

If, as a potential Mentor, you do not feel able to provide impartial and confidential guidance, cannot commit time to meeting your Mentee or do not feel that you can establish a successful rapport with them then you must not agree to be their Mentor.

Line managers or heads of department often act as a Mentor for their staff and this can sometimes work well. However, there is an argument that the Mentee's line manager should not play a role in the Mentoring process, as they may have an existing and potentially conflicting institutional relationship which may inhibit open discussion. If you **are** the Mentee's line manager or head of department, it is important for you to understand that the purpose of the mentoring relationship is to support and guide your Mentee. Budgetary constraints or the conflicting interests of the service or other staff **should not** influence the guidance you give. You should also understand that your Mentee may expect you to offer them guidance and support in order to develop their careers beyond the bounds of their current job description, even if this is not in the immediate interests of our employer.

Note that the Mentee chooses the Mentor and not vice-versa.

Two people should not act as each other's mutual Mentor.

### **Basic points that should be shared and agreed between the Mentor and Mentee at the beginning of the relationship**

The Mentor and the Mentee should agree upon the following:

#### **Confidentiality**

- The details of discussions between the Mentor and Mentee are confidential.
- Issues that require the actions of others may be followed up outside the Mentor/Mentee meeting only by agreement.
- Establish whether written notes can or should be made and if so, whether they need to be agreed as an accurate record by both parties.
- Issues that involve illegality or professional misconduct are not confidential.

#### **Honesty**

- Mentoring requires that both sides will be as honest and open as possible.
- Realise that some Mentoring relationships, although set up with the best of intentions, do not work.
- Understand and agree at the outset a "no fault" arrangement to terminate the relationship if either party requests this.

#### **Structure of meetings**

- In forming a CPD Mentor / Mentee relationship, a commitment is made to schedule regular meetings and it is important that both parties honour that commitment.
- Agree when to meet, how often and for how long. Neither the Mentor nor the Mentee should make excessive demands upon the other's time. Agree what this means in practice and adhere to the arrangement. Most experience shows that meetings on neutral ground, free from interruptions, twice a year are sufficient. Meetings lasting typically 1 to 1.5 hours are most effective. Adhere to any agreed time scale.
- Agree what will, and will not, be covered in the meeting. A mutual checklist or agenda may be beneficial, exchanged a fortnight before each meeting. Your Mentee's annual appraisal or performance review can be the source of ideas for future CPD but likewise, it can also be the cause of anxiety, uncertainty or conflict. One important issue to include is to review and detail any structured private study undertaken or planned for the next CPD year. Another is to review the mentoring relationship & arrangement for value & content.
- Decide if there is to be any informal contact between formal meetings.

### **What mentoring is NOT**

- Unless explicitly stated, there should be no formal, contractual relationship between Mentor and Mentee that defines or limits the mentoring process.
- As such, whilst there may be expectations on both sides, they cannot be legally binding.
- A Mentor may offer guidance but the Mentee is under no obligation to accept or act on it.
- Likewise, the Mentor cannot be held to account if the guidance they give is poor or inadequate.
- Mentoring is a voluntary undertaking and cannot be construed as employment.
- Mentors should not expect to receive financial reward or payment of expenses from their Mentee.

### **What next?**

If you agree to Mentor a CPD registrant, you should read these documents:

Mentoring and the BAA CPD scheme

The BAA CPD scheme