

MentorLink - First Meeting Guide

Purpose of the first meeting

The first meeting sets the tone for the mentoring relationship. It should establish trust, clarify expectations, and define goals.

Suggested agenda (45 – 60 minutes)

Welcome and introductions

- Ahead of your first meeting, exchange bios, resumes, and share a brief history of your experience.

Rapport building

- Establish personal rapport and points of connection by asking questions of each other, such as:
 - a. What do you enjoy doing outside of work or study?
 - b. What's one thing you're proud of professionally?
 - c. What are your current goals (personal/academic/career)?
 - d. What challenges are you facing right now?

Discuss mentoring and past experiences

- What do you want from this experience?
- What comes to mind when you think of mentoring?
- Have you ever been engaged in a mentoring partnership before? What was it like?
- What have you learned or gained from a previous mentoring experience?

Set expectations and roles

- What does a successful mentoring relationship look like?
- Who will be responsible for scheduling meetings?
- How often will you meet and for how long?
- Who will run the meetings? Will there be an agenda?
- Will you correspond between meetings? How often?
- How will you manage time conflicts with scheduled meetings?

Agree on ground rules

- Where do you define boundaries (time availability, etc.)?
- Discuss guidelines around confidentiality. What does confidentiality mean?
- What topics are off-limits?
- How will you respect one another's time, values, and/or limits?

Next steps and future meetings

- Agree on the date and agenda for the next meeting.
- Summarise goals and expectations in a shared document. Define goals using SMART framework: Specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound.

First meeting checklist

- Introductions completed.
- Roles clarified.
- Expectations agreed.
- Ground rules confirmed.
- Goals defined using SMART framework.
- Next meeting scheduled.