**Recommendations & Templates**

**(E-)Mentoring – Postdocs/Doctoral Researchers**

This document includes recommendations regarding the mentoring process, as well as templates for a mentoring agreement and for the minutes of a mentoring session. These are intended as a guide, may be adapted, and are to be kept confidential between mentor and mentee.

**Recommendations regarding the Mentoring Process[[1]](#footnote-1)**

*Participants*

Mentors: Experienced academics willing to share their research and career strategies with early stage researchers

Mentees: Postdocs/Doctoral researchers interested in research and career strategies of experienced academics

*Place and time frame*

The mentoring relationship has a duration of **six months**. The mentoring formally starts with **a kick-off call/online call** in which the aims of the relationship are specified and mutually agreed upon. The mentoring arrangement includes also **one in-person meeting** and **one wrap-up call/skype call**, with regular communication (updates on current developments, etc.) in between.

The **in-person mentoring session** takes place at the **home university of the mentor**, if no alternative location (before or after an ARQUS workshop, a conference, etc.) seems more suitable. The recommended duration of the session is at least two hours.

*Mentoring standards*

Feedback is constructive and future-oriented. It is based on mutual appreciation and aims at developing as a researcher *and* as a human being.

The information exchanged between mentor and mentee shall be considered absolutely confidential and will consequently not be shared with anyone not present at the mentoring session.

Effective mentoring is based on sharing personal experiences and tacit knowledge of the academic world. Hence, mentors may not only address their academic successes but also name difficulties and how they dealt with them.

*Preparation of the in-person meeting*

Prior to the in-person meeting, the mentee provides the mentor with information on his/her academic background, research interests, and career plans. During a kick-off call, mentee and mentor exchange their expectations of the mentoring relationship and define common goals. The goals agreed upon are then again outlined in written form and shared confidentially between them.

*Suggested topics of a mentoring meeting*

Research-related topics: research question/s, and methodology – current relevance in the field and balance between broad and specialised approaches, research design, etc.

Scientific community: identify key institutions and researchers, key conferences and journals in the field, publication strategies, analyse cooperation networks, etc.

Career-orientation: establishing networks and collaborations, visibility strategies (conferencing, research platforms and social media, etc.), proposals for third-party funding, qualification areas and measures (e.g. teaching, leadership, management), doubts and questions regarding current or future career steps (dos and don’ts), etc.

Brainstorming of possible mentoring collaborations/learning opportunities: e.g. conference participations, regular emails – identify what would be helpful and is realistic for both with regards to time and ressources

*Follow-up to the in-person meeting*

Within one week after the meeting, the mentee sums up the session in a concise manner with regard to the pre-defined common goals. The mentor confirms and/or adds further comments and advice to these minutes.

*Wrap-up of the mentoring process*

In a final call/Skype call six months after the kick-off call, mentee and mentor discuss the outcomes of the mentoring relationship and formally wrap up the mentoring relationship. They may also consider future collaborations and the modes of keeping in touch.

**E-mentoring in case of travel restrictions[[2]](#footnote-2)**

When conducting their mentoring relationship online, mentee and mentor might discuss how they want to incorporate the following online-based opportunities into their process:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Physical opportunities of a mentoring stay | Suggested online-based opportunities |
| Shadowing (the mentee physically accompanies and observes the mentor at meetings/in leadership functions) | Mentee can attend meetings and similar events as a guest via an online communication tool |
| Attending events together | Mentor and mentee can both participate in webinars, specialised coaching sessions, attend online conferences and discuss insights afterwards |
| Networking with fellow postdocs/doctoral researchers at the mentor’s university | Mentee can be put in touch with postdocs/doctoral researchers at the mentor’s home university or in their larger network e.g. via email, become part of online-exchange networks, etc. |
| Participating in & presenting at lectures and events at the mentor’s university | Mentee is given guest access to the mentor`s department’s online lectures and events, presents at online events |

Additionally, there could be a strong emphasis on sharing resources and providing access to scholarly/research material. The mentoring partners can also agree to use digital tools (i.e. blogging, forums, other digital platforms) to support their work and reflection processes.

**Wrap-up Questionnaire**

Both, mentee and mentor, are asked to fill in an online questionnaire on the mentoring process. The aim of this questionnaire is to provide a basis to ensure the high quality and further development of the Arqus mentoring scheme

**ARQUS Mentoring Agreement**

Mentee (name):

Mentor (name):

**Duration (starting date and expected end date) of partnership**

**Goals of the mentoring partnership in terms of research**

**Goals of the mentoring partnership in terms of career development**

**List of topics to be discussed**

**Expected place and time of in person meeting/ date of 2 hour-online session**

**Confidentiality and secrecy**

We will respect each other’s privacy. We undertake to treat the contents of our discussions confidentially. We will only talk to third parties about the topics and contents of our mentoring partnership, if we have expressly reached an agreement about this together. The obligation of confidentiality continues, even after the mentoring partnership has ended.

Place/Date

Signature Mentee

Place/Date

Signature Mentor

**Minutes of a Mentoring Session[[3]](#footnote-3)**

Mentee (name):

Mentor (name):

**Date and time of meeting**

**Type of meeting (in person/online meeting/phone call, etc.)**

**Topics covered at the session**

**Recommended activities in terms of research**

**Recommended activities in terms of career development**

**Further comments/recommendations**

1. In case of travel restrictions due to COVID-19 the mentoring relationship will be switched to an e-mentoring model (see below for suggestions). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. See also the document with suggestions for the implementation of e-mentoring. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. The mentee is responsible for writing the minutes. The mentor is responsible for confirming them and, if necessary, for adding further recommendations/advice. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)