

## Framework for mentorships for postdocs and assistant professors

It is of strategic importance to the department to build a positive and supportive environment that can foster competent, competitive, and thriving early career scholars. To realize this, we offer mentorships to promote well-being, reduce uncertainty, and support the academic development of early career scholars in our research collectives.







### The procedure

In the onboarding process and as a part of the EDD, the Head of Section will encourage postdocs and assistant professors to have a mentor assigned as these groups are especially in need of mentor opportunities. It is voluntary arrangement, but if an early career scholar is positive towards the idea, the Head of Section should help assign an appropriate mentor. We encourage that the mentor and mentee come from different sections in order to strengthen networks at the department.

A mentor should be a colleague with more experience than the mentee that have the time and ability to help with career planning as well as professional development. When looking for a mentor, it can also be an advantage to let professional interests and personal chemistry guide the choice as these elements can be crucial for a successful mentorship. To clarify these things, you can set up an initial meeting between a potential mentor and the early career scholar.

### Responsibilities in the mentorship

There is no formula for how a mentorship should unfold, but it should always be based on mutual respect and trust and be driven by individual agreements made between the mentor and mentee. It can be an advantage to plan to meet on a regular basis and to put dates in the calendar at the start of each semester to make room for the mentorship. In the mentorship, it is the responsibility of the mentee to set the agenda and define where she/he needs career-related advice and feedback, while it is responsibility of the mentor to provide this to the best of her/his ability. Some of the following issues can be considered as starting points for the mentorship:

Mentorship expectations	<b>Logistics</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Align expectations on the duration of the mentorship</li> <li>Agree on the number of meetings and the duration of these</li> <li>Talk about how to communicate between the meetings</li> <li>Discuss how to evaluate the mentorship</li> <li>Discuss if it is necessary to make a formal mentorship agreement</li> </ul>
	<b>Boundaries and ethics</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Talk about topics to address / not address in the mentorship</li> <li>Discuss what to do if one feels uncomfortable with a topic and how to ensure an open and honest conversation</li> <li>Talk about how you will respect each other's opinions and boundaries</li> </ul>
	<b>Confidentiality and support</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Talk about your understandings of confidentiality and types of information that cannot be shared outside the mentorship</li> <li>Discuss how to find a good balance between social support and constructive challenges in the mentorship</li> </ul>
Professional advice	<b>Skill development</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Constructive feedback on research and teaching profile</li> <li>Advice on how to develop teaching skills, new teaching and supervision formats and/or courses</li> <li>Discuss when and how to apply for external grants</li> <li>Guidance on how to enhance societal relevance of research and teaching</li> </ul>
	<b>Career planning</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Counsel on actions and tasks that can benefit career</li> <li>Help to clarify career goals and opportunities</li> <li>Guidance and help with building a professional network</li> </ul>
	<b>Well-being at work</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advice on how to deal with career-related uncertainty</li> <li>Guidance on how to maintain a good work-life balance</li> <li>Inclusion of the mentee in collaborations and social life at the department</li> </ul>

### **Ending the mentorship**

Most mentorships end naturally, but if you are unsatisfied with your mentor or mentee, you can inform her/him of this to end the mentorship. When a mentorship ends, you should also inform the Head of Section, so she/he can keep track of the mentor relations in the section.