

Employability Mentoring FAQ

Q. Do mentors need to undertake a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check?

Why is this important to address?

We recognise and understand the importance of safeguarding in our work. The basis of an effective Employability Mentoring project is where all participants' safety and welfare has been considered and that necessary actions have been put in place and are monitored. We understand that due to the nature of studying at university (and therefore in the context of this project) service users will be aged 18 years and over. Whilst most of our students and graduates may not be considered vulnerable, there will be some that are and as such their needs should be taken into account and assessed using a project risk assessment.

What we say about it?

Like all of our Careers and Employability projects we recognise that our students and graduates will come into direct contact with professionals from industry, in the capacity of either one-to-ones, on placement, on internships and through part time work. This is usually of their own choice and actions, as is their involvement in the mentoring scheme. However we also recognise that some students may be considered 'vulnerable' and therefore their needs should be assessed. However we feel that asking mentors to undertake DBS checks would be considered an overly cautious approach, which could put most mentors off registering. Therefore so as not to disempower the student and to help them prepare for a professional career, we aim to guide them in developing good practice as they meet with a professional mentor.

Our actions and response

We will discuss the needs of a mentee at the point of registration to assess their confidence in meeting with a mentor. We can offer guidance to those involved to assess risks for themselves and make informed choices on how to conduct themselves during the mentoring relationship. This includes guidance that all mentees receive in booklet format. We provide them with such information to help them stay safe. When we recruit mentors we ask for a professional reference from each person to help screen applicants.

How you can help

As a mentee, when you engage with us on the project, please be open and honest should there be anything that you think we need to be aware of in terms of any adjustments that we can make to ensure that your needs are taken into account and that you *are* safe and *feel* safe in your mentoring. When on the project keep an open dialogue with us on the project. Learn to risk assess your own work and trust your instincts if you feel something is not right or you feel at risk, reporting it to us immediately.

Contact us

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