

Employability Mentoring FAQ

Q. What is confidentiality and how does it operate on the project?

Why is this important to address?

Confidentiality is an essential part of any mentoring relationship. It sets out how information can be used in situations where there is risk of harm to one of the parties involved. It also agreed that where there is no risk of harm, information can be shared between people in the confidence that unless mutually agreed it will go no further. This is fundamental to a professional trusting relationship and lays the foundations for effective communication.

What we say about it?

We recognise that for our students there is the potential for some of them to be vulnerable and that safeguarding their interests in respect of confidentiality is important. It could be that for some students there are aspects of their life that might come up in conversation with a mentor that raise cause for concern in the eyes of the mentor and that the mentor will want guidance as on what to do. We aim to provide clear guidance on what to do in the interests of confidentiality and safeguarding. We set out our response to safeguarding in an associated document entitled 'How does the project manage safeguarding and what do they say about it'. Therefore we need to provide you with guidance on confidentiality so that if an issue arises this will inform you of what to do next.

Our actions and response

We provide you with this sheet to explain what to do in respect of confidentiality so that you are more aware of how to set out in your relationship with them in this context. Please see below for what to do at the start of the relationship and in the event of an issue arising. Should you alert us of an issue regarding safeguarding we will refer the issue immediately to the safeguarding lead who would follow the correct DMU procedure.

How you can help

When you meet your mentee for the first time, make time and space to talk about confidentiality, ensure that they know what it is, why we use it and what it means to them. Advise them that if they share something that concerns yourself (where you think that they have been or are at risk of harm/abuse) that you cannot keep this information to yourself and you have to refer this to the safeguarding lead at DMU as directed by the Employability Mentoring Project. Once they understand this it is their responsibility to share information with you as they see fit. You have alerted them and you can only respond if you pick up on something that concerns you. If you do pick up on something or it is shared with you, then please undertake the following (PTO):

- Stop them immediately and inform them that you are concerned for their safety and that you have to, as stated at the start pass this information onto the safeguarding lead at DMU as you are concerned for their safety.
- Inform them that it is a positive thing to share with you rather than keep it to them self
- Listen, calmly, without judgement or assumption to them and what they have to say
- Memorise what they say, word for word and make clear unbiased factual notes on what was said
- Do not advise what they should do or take the matter into your own hands
- Do not ask leading questions or change the notes you have made with non-factual info shared
- Do as them if they are in immediate danger of risk of harm (if this is the case, inform the Police)
- Contact the project manager to initiate communications with the safeguarding lead.

Whilst the above can seem daunting, there are a range of highly trained professionals at DMU on hand to assist you if there is an issue. Remember to introduce confidentiality, to stay alert to what is shared, to state you have to act if you are concerned and to follow the above guidance and contact the project manager who will in turn contact the safeguarding leads at DMU.

Contact us

Contact us on 07909 000127 or 0116 207 8979

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