



**UNIVERSITY OF HEALTH AND ALLIED SCIENCES**



**MENTORSHIP POLICY**

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# **MENTORSHIP POLICY**

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## **FOREWORD**

*Dear Colleagues:*

*University of Health and Allied Sciences seeks to be a pre-eminent health research educational institution dedicated to community service. UHAS intends to realise this vision by taking innovative approaches to research, teaching and engagement with society, informed by a culture of scholarship, academic and service excellence. We cannot achieve this without realising our core values of excellence. This requires sustained focus on equity in all of our efforts to recruit, hire, promote and retain exceptionally well-qualified employees.*

*This Mentorship Policy serves as a companion resource, providing direction for promotion and retention efforts within each School/Institute/Directorate. This Policy is intended to assist Schools/Institutes/Directorates in implementing mentoring programmes. The Policy also provides targeted resources for mentors and mentees, with a particular focus on empowering employees and students to seek and shape important mentoring relationships.*

*The University formulated this Policy in the belief that adherence to its guidelines would have a positive impact on employees and students and enhance the climate of inclusiveness University-wide, thus building a stronger University community. A thriving, diverse community is essential to creating a dynamic learning and working environment that will prepare all members of the UHAS community to lead in global society.*

*Mentoring has been described as an interpersonal relationship between individuals who are at different stages in their professional development (Toal-Sullivan, 2002). Mentors may serve as role models, and act as advisors, guides or advocates in a variety of contexts (Jipson & Paley, 2000). The expectations of those involved in the mentoring relationship will determine the purposes that are served. An active mentor can contribute significantly to a new faculty member's development and job satisfaction. The underlying assumption of mentoring as a form of learning and professional development originates from the belief that learning occurs through observing, role modelling, apprenticeship, and questioning (Kanuka, 2005). Research has also demonstrated that senior colleagues play a highly important role in creating the kind of academic environment that supports the success of early-career faculty (Rice, Sorcinelli & Austin, 2000). Mentoring is intended to provide intellectual, professional and social support as new faculty develop their careers and their professional identities.*

*We hope you will find this policy valuable in your role as mentor, mentee, and/or Dean/Director/Head of mentoring initiatives within your outfit. Thank you for all that you do to strengthen our community and ensure future growth and excellence of UHAS.*

*Sincerely,*

**PROF. JOHN O. GYAPONG**

*Vice Chancellor*

## **DEFINITION OF TERMS AND ACRONYMS**

<b>UHAS</b>	University of Health and Allied Sciences
<b>Senior Members</b>	(academic and professional staff)
	Junior (students)
<b>Staff</b>	Senior
	Junior
<b>FMP</b>	Faculty Mentorship Programme
<b>HOD</b>	Head of Department
<b>SCMP</b>	Student Career Mentorship Programme

# **1 INTRODUCTION**

## **1.1 About the UHAS Mentorship Policy**

The University of Health and Allied Sciences (UHAS) was established by an Act of Parliament (Act 828) in December, 2011 and envisioned to become a pre-eminent research and practically oriented health educational institution dedicated to community service. The University seeks to do this by hiring competent, experienced and motivated staff and retaining them to fulfil its mandate.

UHAS is committed to the value of formal mentoring for career success. Mentoring, formal or informal, is a responsibility that more experienced members of the UHAS community have toward their less experienced colleagues.

This policy document outlines the University's approach to mentorship. It provides mentors and mentees with a framework and practical guidance to support the process of mentorship in UHAS. The University has grown over the years in terms of both employee and student population. The number of academic programmes has also increased significantly. Increasingly, early-career employees have been facing changing requirements for tenure, a more competitive research climate, teaching and service demands. These pressures can undermine the energy, creativity and commitment that these candidates bring to the table. Considering the fact that new employees, who are relatively young and without much experience, are being routinely engaged, it is important to provide such staff with effective support and guidance to integrate them into the University through mentorship.

## **1.2 Rationale for the Policy**

Work in higher education in general has become more diversified and complex, requiring astute faculty, administrators, staff and students. Employees, when promoted, are often confronted with significant skill gaps in their move from technical roles to management and leadership roles. University administration is increasingly becoming more demanding in terms of the level of professionalism required of administrators.

UHAS has experienced substantial growth and rapid change characterised by increased student and employee numbers, among others. It is therefore urgent that the University enhance the professional skills of its members and staff.

In addition, diversity and inclusion in the workplace is a priority that this document, in tandem with the UHAS Diversity and Inclusion Policy, will seek to promote.

This policy therefore provides guidelines for conducting formal mentorship through the University's Mentorship Programme. It is believed that this will bridge the existing gap in access. It is aimed at providing effective guides for mentoring of new/inexperienced staff in the University in the areas of teaching, research and administration, with the view to improving staff performance.

## **1.3 Guiding Principles**

UHAS is committed to "fostering professional and personal competence, growth and success of employees and students." (UHAS Strategic Plan). In line with this, UHAS shall, at all levels of the programme, be guided by the following principles:

- i. UHAS shall use mentoring as a tool to develop its employees and students;
- ii. The mentoring process shall be informed by ethical considerations and best practices;

- iii. Quality assurance metrics shall be used to assess the management and delivery of the Mentorship Programme;
- iv. The Mentorship Programme shall take into account individual differences and circumstances of employees and students, including equity in gender, disability, discipline of study, availability of resources and opportunities;
- v. The Mentorship Programme shall ensure that conflicts of interest are minimized and confidentiality protected;
- vi. The University shall recognise excellence in mentoring;
- vii. The Programme shall support mentors with appropriate orientation, training, guidelines, and resources;
- viii. Participation in the Mentorship Programme is voluntary. No stigma will be attached to opting out of the programme or making adjustments, such as switching mentors;
- ix. The Mentorship Programme shall be gender-sensitive. As a formal mentoring programme, it will ensure that:
  - Both genders are well represented as both mentors and mentees
  - Females as well as males are receiving adequate opportunities for professional development.

#### **1.4 Scope of the Policy**

The UHAS Mentorship Programme covers three categories of UHAS employees and students, namely, faculty, administrative and professional staff, and students.

## **2 FACULTY MENTORSHIP PROGRAMME (FMP)**

Recognising that mentoring would help UHAS to achieve its goals of producing high-quality faculty in a diverse and positive work environment, the University shall adopt a formal Faculty Mentorship Programme (FMP). In order that as many faculty members as possible have equal opportunity to participate in it, the programme will ensure that:

- i. UHAS shall assign a mentor to each newly appointed early-career faculty;
- ii. Existing faculty taking on new responsibilities in the University who are not experienced shall also be assigned mentors;
- iii. UHAS shall offer the opportunity to existing faculty to request for a mentor as part of their continuous development.

### **2.1 FMP Goals and Objectives**

The overall goal of the FMP is to empower mentees by supporting their professional growth and development. The specific objectives of the policy are as follows:

- i. To support the professional development of mentees within their specific areas of expertise by identifying career developmental needs of faculty;
- ii. To provide opportunity for interactions between junior and senior faculty to foster mutual respect, employee engagement and productivity;
- iii. To provide access to networks or contacts for academic development;
- iv. To enable new staff to understand the functions, philosophy, systems, processes and purposes of the departments or academic groups and the culture of the University;

### **2.2 FMP Priority Mentoring Areas**

Although the specific needs of mentees will differ, mentors should provide them with information, advice, and support as they progress in their career.

The following priority mentoring areas may be useful to mentees:

**Getting to Know the Institution.** Mentors may assist mentees in learning about the academic culture of departments, schools/institutes, and UHAS; identifying resources to support research and teaching; and creating a trusted network of junior and senior colleagues.

**Excelling at Teaching and Research.** Mentor support for teaching may include the development of new courses, pedagogical methods, technologies, and interdisciplinary curricula; offering suggestions on course outline preparation, classroom delivery, setting of examination questions, preparation of marking scheme and grading; and supplying feedback on instruction based on classroom visits. Mentor support for research includes the development of a research/writing plan that covers strategies for disseminating research, identifying sources of internal and external funding, supplying feedback on manuscripts and grant proposals, and advising on the development of new research collaborations.

**Understanding Promotion and Advancement.** Mentors may clarify department and school expectations for promotion and tenure, support the development of a tenure dossier, and discuss strategies for success in evaluation processes.

**Creating Work-Life Balance.** Mentor assistance in this area can include advising on how to set priorities and drawing a professional development plan; assisting with identification of short-term and long-term goals; advising on optimal time allocation across research, teaching, and community service responsibilities; identifying strategies for managing available time, avoiding pitfalls, overcoming difficulties and attending to quality-of-life issues such as dual careers, childcare and affordable housing.

**Developing Professional Networks.** Mentees should strive to establish substantive, career-enhancing relationships with faculty who share similar interests in teaching, research and community service. In addition to supporting development of these relationships, mentors may assist in identifying appropriate opportunities for engagement and leadership within the schools, institutes and/or departments.

## **2.3 FMP Mentoring Process**

The mentoring process for faculty members is as follows:

### **2.3.1 Assignment of Mentees to Mentor**

- i. School/Institute shall ensure the maintenance of appropriate numbers of trained mentors;
- ii. Requests for mentoring shall be directed to the School/Institute Mentoring Coordinators following discussions with newly appointed academic staff during their induction. The request should be supported by a completed mentee application form outlining the mentee's academic subject(s), what is required from a mentor, the mentee's main objectives and priorities and current continuous professional development activities;
- iii. The first meeting between the mentee and the mentor shall normally be arranged within a month of the mentee commencing work, and shall include a review of the induction process to date and agreement on ways of working together;
- iv. It is recommended that mentors and mentees meet officially at least once a month for faculty in the first year of appointment and twice a semester for faculty beyond the first year of appointment;
- v. During meetings, mentorship progress forms shall be completed by both mentors and mentees; and

- vi. If, at any time, either party wishes to end the mentoring arrangement, it will be appropriate to secure an alternative mentor before terminating the existing mentoring programme.

### **2.3.2 Training of Mentors and Mentees**

Faculty who undertake the mentoring role shall be provided with appropriate training and guidance and will be required to participate in regular workshops.

### **2.3.3 Implementation of the Programme.**

#### **1. Selection.**

Prospective mentees will meet with the Head of Department early in the first semester of their employment to aid in identifying two faculty mentors, at least one of whom should be tenured. By providing two mentors, this process relies on the value of different perspectives in mentoring. The HOD shall take into account the new faculty's preferences and appoint two mentors, making formal note of this service contribution by these two faculty members.

**2. Duration of Mentor-Mentee commitment.** The length of mentorship commitment set forth in the Mentor Agreement Form will be two academic years.

**3. Duties.** The mentee and mentors will work to determine the level and form of interaction, with the mentee playing an active role. An initial needs assessment will result in identification of the number and type of interactions throughout the year, although it is expected that the mentee meet at least once a semester with the mentor, either individually or as a group. Topics to be considered in the needs assessment should include those listed in the priority mentoring areas.

**4. Tracking of Programme.** Each academic year, both mentor and mentee shall report to the HOD whether the mentoring process proceeded in a way they judged to be mutually satisfactory. This report may be included in the annual faculty review discussions with the HOD. If the mentee reports that the process has been unsatisfactory, the HOD shall explore the reasons for this and propose appropriate remedies.

**5. Monitoring and Implementation.** The Directorate of Human Resources shall monitor the implementation of the Mentorship Policy in collaboration with the Directorate of Quality Assurance.

## **2.4 Roles and Responsibilities**

### **2.4.1 Who Can Be a Faculty Mentor?**

A mentor should ideally be a more experienced faculty with a minimum rank of senior lecturer. He or she must be committed to the University's equality and diversity principles and must have the relevant skills to support mentoring in priority areas.

### **2.4.2 Responsibilities of Faculty Mentors**

It is the responsibility of Mentors to help Mentees to come to their own conclusions about issues that they may be facing. The mentor's role entails the following responsibilities:

- i. Be proactive in the mentoring process;
- ii. Give the mentee the necessary attention to enable him/her set realistic goals;
- iii. Adopt a nurturing attitude in presenting the mentee to other members of staff;

- iv. Offer constructive feedback to enable the mentee bring out his/her potential for professional development;
- v. Do follow-ups to see whether the mentee is doing what is required;
- vi. Build rapport with the mentee to boost his/her self-confidence;
- vii. Provide appropriate advice, guidance and support to enable mentee complete his/her induction into new duties or continuous professional development tasks;
- viii. Prepare annual mentoring progress reports.

#### **2.4.3 Responsibilities of Faculty Mentees**

The mentee shall:

- i. Bear a significant part for making the mentoring programme productive and rewarding. In general, mentees should always try to be open and honest with their mentors to promote respect and trust;
- ii. Contribute to the setting of agenda for the mentorship programme;
- iii. Actively pursue the aims of the mentoring activities established in conjunction with their mentors;
- iv. Use the mentoring experience to enhance personal and professional growth;
- v. Keep agreements made with mentors on regularity of meetings and communication;
- vi. Prepare for and participate in meetings with mentors;
- vii. Keep mentors informed of progress and problems.

#### **2.4.4 Faculty Mentorship Committee**

The Dean/Director of the School/Institute, in consultation with Pro Vice-Chancellor, shall constitute School/Institute Mentorship Committee, which shall include HoDs, Mentorship Coordinator and School Officer.

NB: This committee also has oversight of the Student Career Mentorship Programme (see section 4).

#### **2.4.5 Responsibilities of Deans/Directors**

The responsibilities of the Director/Dean shall include the following:

- i. In consultation with HoDs, recommend to the Registrar, a Mentorship Coordinator who will coordinate and monitor the mentorship programme, providing support, including appropriate training and guidance to mentors;
- ii. Preside over the School/Institute Mentorship Committee which shall include HoDs, Mentorship Coordinator and School Officer, to:
  - a. Identify faculty who qualify to be mentors as specified in section 1.10
  - b. Encourage the formation of broad networks of diverse and underrepresented groups for social and professional development
- iii. Disseminate information on the programme to the schools as required;
- iv. Ensure good interpersonal relationship and communication with mentors and mentees;
- v. Arrange training in consultation with Heads of Departments;
- vi. Be the point of reference for questions about mentorship in UHAS;
- vii. Facilitate the introduction between mentors and mentees and give short briefings to explain the principles of the mentorship policy;
- viii. Resolve conflicts between mentors and mentees;
- ix. Evaluate the mentorship process.

#### **2.4.6 Responsibilities of Mentorship Coordinator**

- Assist the Dean in coordinating and monitoring the mentorship programme;

- Provide appropriate training and guidance to mentors;
- Discuss the mentorship programme with the mentor and mentee, together with the HoD, and check in with them periodically;
- Liaise with Mentorship Coordinators from other Schools to identify the availability of suitable mentors from those Schools;
- Discuss the mentorship programme with the mentor and mentee and check in with them periodically;
- Build rapport with mentors and mentees through relevant social activities such as lunches at the expense of the University.

#### **2.4.7 Guidelines for Head of Department**

- Endorse mentorship as a valuable service contribution to the University and support recognition of those who engage in it;
- Assist in advertising the Mentorship Programme and recruiting potential mentors;
- Provide information on the mentorship programme to all potential hires during interview;
- Make sure new faculty have lists of people to contact for different needs;
- Expected to take mentoring responsibilities into account when determining staff workloads and when reviewing the performance and professional development needs of both mentors and mentees.

### **2.5 Assessment /Evaluation of Faculty Mentorship Programme**

Both the mentors and mentees are expected to participate in regular evaluation of the programme's effectiveness to be conducted by the school's Mentorship Committee. Factors to be considered in the evaluation shall include frequency of contact and the status of mentoring goals, mentee's integration with the UHAS community such as application for promotion, service to committees, intention to continue or discontinue with the Mentorship programme, etc.

The evaluation may also consider factors such as:

- Quality of information shared
- Relative comfort level enjoyed by both
- Quality of the constructive relationship between mentor and mentee
- On-going quality improvement
- Degree of rapport established and
- Availability of mentor when needed

## **3 ADMINISTRATIVE AND PROFESSIONAL MENTORSHIP PROGRAMME (APMP)**

### **3.1 Goals and Objectives**

The Administrative and Professional Mentorship Programme (APMP) serves as a key knowledge transfer/succession-planning tool aimed at supporting the Directorate of Human Resources' philosophy of having the right kind and number of diverse leaders to achieve the University's mission. The Administrative and Professional Mentorship Programme is designed to provide institutional knowledge for specific leadership areas that target mentees' development and knowledge transfer. Mentorship will accelerate the culture of high performance in management positions.

### **3.2 APMP Priority Mentoring Areas**

Specifically, APMP will be aligned with the following human capital areas:

- **Onboarding** – Support recruits, trainees, and/or new employees to understand the University’s values, vision and mission;
- **Skills Enhancement** - Encourage successful, experienced, and highly competent staff to pass their knowledge, skills and experience on to others;
- **Organizational Development, Culture and Change** – Help communicate the values, vision, and mission of the university. A one-on-one relationship can help employees understand the organizational culture and make any necessary changes;
- **Professional Identity** – Contribute to understanding of what it means to be a professional in the working environment. Professionals embody the values of the profession and are self-initiating and self-regulating;
- **Career Development** – Help administrative and professional staff plan, develop, grow, and manage their careers. Mentoring also helps employees become resilient in times of change, more self-reliant in their careers, and more responsible as self-directed learners;
- **Leadership and Management Development** – Encourage the development of leadership competencies. These competencies are often more easily gained through application and guided practice rather than by education and training;
- **Education Support** – Help to bridge the gap between theory and practice. Formal education and training are complemented by the knowledge and hands-on experience of a competent practitioner;
- **Customer Service** – Assist in modeling desired behaviours, encouraging the development of competencies in support of customer service and, above all, cultivating the right attitudes;
- **Staff Retention** – Provide a supportive environment. Ongoing interactions, coaching, teaching, and role modeling will facilitate progression within the university. In addition, mentoring has been found to influence employee retention because it helps establish an organizational culture that is attractive to the top talent clamoring for growth opportunities;
- **Employee Engagement** - Show employees in a tangible way that they are valued and that the Directorate’s/School/Institute’s/Department’s/Unit’s future includes them;
- **Recruitment** – Enhance recruitment goals by offering additional incentives to prospective employees;
- **Knowledge Management/Knowledge Transfer** – Provide for the interchange/exchange of information and knowledge between members of different organizations and within organizations.

### 3.3 APMP Mentoring Process

The mentoring process for administrative and professional staff is as follows:

#### 3.3.1 *Assignment of Mentee to Mentor*

The following is an outline of steps mentors and mentees may take to initiate their Mentorship Programme and to sustain it from cycle to cycle:

- i. Create mentor/mentee pairings based on compatibility from application forms or targeted matches for new hires entering specific occupations;
- ii. Conduct an orientation session;
- iii. Conduct planned activities;
- iv. At the mid-year or mid-point of the programme, ask all mentees and mentors to complete the mid-point evaluation form. Take action as necessary on the evaluations;
- v. Evaluate each step of the implementation;
- vi. There will be an ongoing programme evaluation with the mentors and mentees to measure the success of the programme;
- vii. Conduct the final evaluation and take action as necessary prior to launching the next programme cycle.

### **3.3.2 Training of Mentors and Mentees**

Mentors who undertake the mentoring role shall be provided with appropriate training and guidance. Workshops will be held for mentors and mentees on a regular basis.

### **3.3.3 Implementation of the Programme**

**1. Selection/Matching Criteria.** The Director of Human Resources should be able to identify participants with the most knowledge, skills, and experience to act as mentors.

The following optional criteria may be used to match Mentors with Mentees:

- i. Career level
- ii. Grade
- iii. Years in the organization
- iv. Certification levels, responsibilities, or job titles which define job levels
- v. Number of years of recent experience in the job
- vi. Peer recommendations

**2. Duration of Mentor-Mentee Commitment.** The length of mentorship commitment set forth in the Mentorship Agreement Form will be two academic years. However, the agreement will be evaluated after two academic years and may be renewed. To maximize the outcome of this experience and ensure that mentors derive value from the time they dedicate to mentee career development, it is recommended that mentees devote a minimum of 5 hours per month to APMP activities.

**3. Duties.** The mentee and mentors will work to determine the level and form of interaction, with the mentee playing an active role. An initial needs assessment will result in identification of the number and type of interactions throughout the year, although it is expected that the mentee should meet at least once a semester with the mentor, either individually or as a group. Topics to be considered in the needs assessment should include those listed in the priority mentoring areas.

**4. Tracking of Programme.** Each academic year, both mentor and mentee shall report to the Director whether the mentoring process proceeded in a way they judged to be mutually satisfactory. This report may be included in the annual administrative/professional staff review with the Director. If the mentee reports that the process has been unsatisfactory, the Director shall explore the reasons for this and propose appropriate remedies.

**5. Monitoring and Implementation.** The Directorate of Human Resources shall monitor the implementation of the Administrative and Professional Staff Mentorship Programme. The APMP Coordinator shall submit annual report on mentorship activities to the Director of HR.

### **3.4 Roles and Responsibilities**

#### **3.4.1 Who can be a Mentor?**

Any member from the rank of Senior Assistant Registrar and above or equivalent qualifies to serve as a mentor. He or she must be committed to the University's inclusion, equality and diversity principles and must have the relevant skills to support the programme.

#### **3.4.2 Responsibilities of the Chair**

The Director of Human Resources will be responsible for constituting a Mentorship Committee and selecting mentorship coordinators in consultation with the Registrar. Director HR will be the Chair of the mentorship committee.

#### **3.4.3 Role of the Mentorship Committee**

The committee shall have a term of two years renewable for another term. The responsibilities shall include but are not limited to the following:

- Coordinate and monitor the Administrative and Professional Mentorship Programme and provide support, including appropriate training and guidance to mentors;
- Disseminate information on the Mentorship Programme as required;
- Ensure good interpersonal relationship and communication with mentors and mentees;
- Facilitate training of mentors;
- Facilitate the introduction between mentors and mentees and give short briefings to explain the principles of the mentorship policy;
- Resolve any conflicts that may arise between mentors and mentees;
- Evaluate the mentorship process;

#### **3.4.4 Responsibilities of the Mentorship Coordinators**

- Review and make thorough and consistent evaluations of the participants' progress;
- Provide support to guide and direct efforts of mentors and mentees to ensure successful Mentorship Programme completion;
- Facilitate planning and managing participant's assessments, tracking and scheduling activities, documentation of reporting requirements;
- Continuously review and evaluate APMP assignments and activities throughout the Mentorship Programme cycles and ensure instructions are organized and procedures match relevant forms and checklists;
- Prepare the annual report on the Administrative and Professional Mentorship Programme.

#### **3.4.5 Responsibilities of the Mentor**

- Meet with mentee and engage in mentoring activities in-person (or on the telephone as a backup);
- Willingly share experiences and professional success in the university;
- Look for experiences that will stretch the mentee (i.e., shadowing during meetings, suggested readings, etc.);

- Stay accessible, committed, and engaged during the length of the mentorship programme;
- Offer encouragement through genuine positive reinforcement;
- Be a positive role model by sharing “lessons learned” from own experiences;
- Be a resource and a sounding-board;
- Keep conversations confidential;
- Inform the Mentorship Coordinator of any issues with the mentee;
- Work with the mentee in developing an Individual Development Plan (IDP);
- Ensure mentee work projects have start and end dates, and do not distract from the mentee’s official duties;
- Meet routinely with the mentee to discuss and monitor progress;
- Provide feedback and recommendations for Mentorship Programme improvement.

#### **3.4.6 Responsibilities of the Mentee**

- Meet with the mentor once a month and engage in mentoring activities in person (or on the telephone as a backup);
- Be proactive about contacting the mentor and scheduling meetings;
- Commit to self- development;
- Assume responsibility for acquiring or improving skills and knowledge;
- Discuss individual development planning with the mentor;
- Be open and honest on goals, expectations, challenges, and concerns so others can help;
- Prepare for mentorship meetings and come with an agenda;
- Actively listen and ask questions;
- Seek advice, opinion, feedback, and direction from the mentor;
- Be receptive to constructive criticism/feedback and ask for it;
- Keep mentorship conversations confidential;
- Respect the mentor’s time and resources;
- Stay accessible, committed, and engaged during the length of the mentorship programme;
- Provide feedback to the mentor on what is working or not working in the mentorship relationship;
- Let the APMP Coordinator know as soon as possible if having a problem connecting with the mentor.

### **3.5 Assessment and Evaluation of Administrative and Professional Mentorship Programme**

Both the Mentors and Mentees are expected to participate in regular evaluations of the programme’s effectiveness. Factors to be considered in the evaluation shall include frequency of contact and the status of mentoring goals, mentee’s integration with the UHAS community such as application for promotion, service to committees, intention to continue or discontinue with the Mentoring Programme, etc. The evaluation may also consider factors such as:

- Quality of information shared;
- Relative comfort level enjoyed by both;
- Quality of the constructive relationship between mentor and mentee;
- On-going quality improvement;
- Degree of rapport established; and
- Availability of mentor when needed

## **4 STUDENT CAREER MENTORSHIP PROGRAMME (SCMP) AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING PROGRAMME**

The Student Career Mentorship Programme (SCMP) links students with working professionals who are willing to share their experience and expertise. The initiative is designed to bridge the gap between the University and Industry by helping students to make contacts in specific employment areas and to provide them with an opportunity to enhance their professional skills and employment knowledge outside of their academic studies. Work placements, internships or future graduate employment are not guaranteed as part of this programme. Participation in SCMP assumes full understanding of and adherence to the contents of this policy.

Part of the SCMP is already being implemented through the existing Vocational Training Programme (VT) of UHAS, which takes place during the long vacation for a period of eight weeks. During VT, students interact with professionals across all levels of the health and allied sciences service delivery system. SCMP will seek to formalise the mentoring relationships established during VT.

***NB: The Student Career Mentorship Programme is different from the Student Academic Advisory Programme.***

### **4.1 SCMP Goals and Objectives**

The objectives of SCMP are to:

- i. Assist students to adapt and reach their full potential in the employment marketplace;
- ii. Facilitate transition of students who have completed their studies and are about to enter the job market.
- iii. Help students' access professional networks necessary for their career growth and success in their fields of endeavour.

### **4.2 SCMP Priority Mentoring Areas**

The SCMP could include but is not limited to:

- i. Increasing mentees' understanding of the workplace culture, job market and industry trends
- ii. Providing guidance to improve mentee's profile
- iii. Providing career guidance and goal setting
- iv. Providing guidance on professional accreditation

### **4.3 SCMP Mentoring Process**

The career mentoring process for students is as follows:

**Commencement.** Mentor and mentee applications are processed; all parties are taken through orientation and introduced to the Mentorship Coordinator.

#### ***4.3.1 Matching Mentors and Mentees***

Mentor and mentee are matched by the Mentorship Coordinator based on their professional backgrounds and profiles in a transparent process as follows:

- i. The coordinator receives the application form;
- ii. Checks that the mentor applicants are active members and fit the stated criteria;
- iii. Checks that mentees who apply to be mentored have been invited to participate;
- iv. Mentees are put on the list to be matched on a first come, first served basis;

- v. Mentees and mentor preferences are matched based on background details from the application form, such as careers or positions pursued, industry interests, etc.;
- vi. Mentees who have not secured a place are notified first. Then mentors and mentees who have been matched are provided with each other's contact information.

#### **4.3.2 Initial meeting**

The Mentorship Coordinator arranges a meeting between the mentor and the mentee to enable them get acquainted and agree on methods of communication, etc.

#### **4.3.3 Mentoring**

Setting of goals, agreeing on a list of activities, access to/guidance on resources and introduction to networking opportunities/professional contacts.

#### **4.3.4 Review and Feedback**

Review progress and provide feedback to the Mentoring Coordinator. If mentee wishes to stay in the programme, a new cycle commences.

### **4.4 Implementation of the Programme**

As per the mentoring process, the following administrative processes need to be adhered to:

#### **1. Entering the scheme as a Mentor**

- i. To become a mentor, the mentorship application form needs to be completed. This will be used for the purpose of matching the mentor with a mentee, facilitating the career Mentorship Programme and for statistics used by the mentorship committee.
- ii. The Mentorship Coordinator captures the mentor's details and confirms his/her registration in the database.
- iii. The Mentorship Coordinator provides the mentor with orientation/guidance where applicable.
- iv. When a suitable mentee has been identified, the Mentorship Coordinator informs the mentor and mentee of the match, and provides the parties with their respective contact details.
- v. The mentor and mentee then agree to an initial meeting where they get to know each other, decide on methods of communication and the way forward.

#### **2. Reports and Meetings**

The Career Mentorship Committee will meet quarterly to facilitate best-practice sharing, provide feedback in the form of activity reports, and raise any issues of concern, to be escalated to the Dean or Directorate of Quality Assurance. Activity reports are to be submitted at the quarterly meeting (or directly to the Mentorship Coordinator, if the meeting cannot be attended). If, at any stage during the mentorship programme, a mentor or a mentee is unable to continue with the arrangement, he/she is to notify the Mentorship Coordinator so that he can be deleted from the Mentorship Programme database. The remaining party will then be matched up with another partner, if one is available.

### **4.5 Roles and Responsibilities**

#### **4.5.1 Who can be a Student Career Mentor?**

To be eligible to serve as a Student Career Mentor, the potential mentor must meet the following criteria:

- i. Must be competent and a member in good standing of the professional association a student will join after graduation;
- ii. Have at least three years of work experience in the same profession;
- iii. Have a sincere interest to participate in the mentorship programme;
- iv. Agree to share some personal information with the UHAS career mentorship committee/mentee as required on the mentorship application form. This will be used for the purpose of matching the mentor with a mentee, and to facilitate the programme;
- v. Reside or work where students attend school/work/reside.
- vi. Agree to commit to the programme for at least two months; commit to spending time with the mentee, including face-to-face meetings, telephone conversations and e-meetings;
- vii. Attend mentorship training meetings as needed.
- viii. Be willing to communicate regularly with the Career Mentorship Coordinator;
- ix. Ensure the Mentee maintains documentation of meetings held with highlights of discussions (reference standard form); and
- x. Submit activity information to the coordinator (progress tracking) as needed.

#### **4.5.2 Responsibilities of a Mentor**

- i. Assist the mentee to set realistic goals and objectives;
- ii. Gain understanding of resources available for the mentee and provide guidance to the mentee based on his/her needs;
- iii. Be a resource and advisor (the coordinator will provide guidance on where to obtain the resources and material);
- iv. Introduce the mentee to professional networking opportunities;
- v. Act as a sounding-board and provide feedback to the mentee;
- vi. Allocate adequate time for mentoring, maintain communication, and follow through on commitments;
- vii. Inform the Mentorship Coordinator about any issues or problems;
- viii. Inform the Mentorship Coordinator about the completion of the Programme and provide feedback where appropriate;
- ix. Attend Mentor meetings to share experience
- x. Provide activity reports.

#### **4.5.3 Responsibilities of a Mentee**

- i. Prepare a list of questions before meeting with the mentor and follow up on mentor's suggestions and agreed next steps;
- ii. Assume equal responsibility for ongoing contact throughout the mentorship programme;
- iii. Document meetings and close out reports with input and sign off from Mentor;
- iv. Schedule meeting dates and keep commitments;
- v. Check in periodically with Mentorship Coordinator to give progress updates;
- vi. Inform the mentor and Mentorship Coordinator of any issues or problems.

#### **4.5.4 Role of the Student Career Mentorship Committee**

The Faculty Mentorship Committee also has oversight of the Student Career Mentorship Programme (see section 2.4.4 Faculty Mentorship Committee).

#### **4.5.5 Responsibilities of the SCMP Coordinator**

- i. Submit summary activity report to the Dean;
- ii. Report on any issues of interest to the Dean;
- iii. Receive and respond to enquiries from mentors and mentees about the career mentorship programme;
- iv. Administer the database of mentors and mentees;
- v. Liaise with professionals and experts with regards to mentor recruitment initiatives and link with Student Mentorship Programme.

#### **4.5.6 Graduate/Post Graduate Students Mentoring Programme**

UHAS is currently training some students at the graduate/post graduate levels. This includes medical students who do the 5<sup>th</sup> year, etc.

Mentoring enables graduate students to:

- I. Acquire a body of knowledge and skills;
- II. Learn techniques for collaborating and networking;
- III. Gain perspective on how a discipline operates academically, socially, and politically;
- IV. Develop a sense of scholarly citizenship by grasping their role in a larger educational enterprise;
- V. Deal more confidently with the challenges of intellectual work.

## **5 CONCLUSION/SUMMARY**

The University's human capital is its most valuable resource. Mentorship represents the most tangible means of continuing the tradition of excellence. The mentorship programme for employees and students at UHAS is based on the recognition that it is difficult to advance without multiple sources of support.

To better retain and revitalize our employees, UHAS considers mentorship as a crucial component of its staff development programme. The UHAS Mentorship Programme is intended to nurture, recognize and broaden the range of opportunities available to employees and students who avail themselves of it.

### **Policy Review Procedure**

The Directorate of Human Resources will review the UHAS Mentorship Policy periodically to ensure its continued relevance and effectiveness. In the event that any statement in the policy document is outdated or in need of amendment as a result of the changing University environment, market forces, or any other reason, such amendment may be effected after following laid down policy review procedures.

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**LOCAL POSTAL ADDRESS**

University of Health and Allied Sciences  
Pmb 31 Ho, Volta Region, Ghana

Phone: +233 (0) 36-2196136

Phone: +233 (0) 50-8534404

Phone: +233 (0) 24-5125359

Email: [info@UHAS.edu.gh](mailto:info@UHAS.edu.gh)

Web: [www.UHAS.edu.gh](http://www.UHAS.edu.gh)

**UHAS WEBSITE**

[www.UHAS.edu.gh](http://www.UHAS.edu.gh)

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**OVERSEAS ADDRESS**

The Overseas Representatives  
Universities of Ghana Office  
321 City Road, London EC1V 1LJ  
England

Phone: +44 (0) 207-2787413

Fax: +44 (0) 207-7135776

E-mail: [ugoouk@aol.com](mailto:ugoouk@aol.com)

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