**Mentoring Student Dietitians:**

**Guidance for the Mentors of Dietetic Students**

The purpose of this document is to support mentors of Coventry University dietetic students in the placement setting. It is also recommended mentors make use of the suggested resources in addition the guidance below.

According to Hawker, McMillan and Palermo (2013):

**Effective mentors are:**  supportive, flexible, non-judgmental, readily accessible in stressful situations, reassuring, honest, trustworthy and committed to the process.

**Effective mentees:** are organised, use their initiative, have professional goals, are self-directed, accept feedback, are reflective and are also committed to the process.

**Suggested mentoring framework for placements B & C**

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| **Meeting** | **Week** | **Suggested Prompts** |
| 1 | 1-2 | Travel/accommodation arrangements  What areas did the student enjoy at university?  What areas is s/he looking forward to on placement?  Has s/he settled into the department?  Their roles/responsibilities/concerns outside of placement?  Does s/he have any concerns or queries?  Identify the student’s current areas of strength and weakness  Identify an action plan |
| 2 | 5-6 | What has the student enjoyed most about placement so far?  What successes has s/he had so far?  What has the student found most difficult so far?  Are there any concerns outside of placement travel, accommodation, health, personal, caring responsibilities etc.  Have the student’s areas of strength and weakness changed since the 1st meeting?  Update on progress made with the previous action plan  Identify an updated action plan |
| 3 | 10-11 | Identify recent successes and areas of difficulty  Update on action plan?  Identify current areas of strength and weakness  B placement students – identify areas for development prior to placement C  C Placement students only – identify areas for development +/or employment |

* Within a student’s placement programme space should be available for mentorship meetings to take place.
* Meeting duration would normally be 30-60 minutes.
* Three mentor meetings throughout the placement are recommended, subject to the needs of the individual student.
* Discussion within the mentorship meeting should be kept confidential.
* Should the mentor consider there is information that needs to be disclosed to a third party – this should be clearly outlined to the mentee and where appropriate the mentee should be encouraged to disclose such information themselves.
* Action plan to be brought to each meeting by the student.
* Action plan to be completed by the student to support discussion.

**Additional student support available;**

The following sources of support are available at Coventry University for enrolled students;

* Finance
* Health & Well-being (counselling)
* Academic support
* Disability
* Welfare

For further information please direct students to the Coventry University Student Portal.

**Useful Resources:**

British Dietetic Association (1998) Mentoring in the Dietetic Profession

Guidance Paper. Available online at: [www.rgu.ac.uk/7ADEE5F0-7EB7-11E3-8B2A0050568D00BF](http://www.rgu.ac.uk/7ADEE5F0-7EB7-11E3-8B2A0050568D00BF)

Hawker, J., McMillan, A., and Palermo, C. (2013) Enduring mentoring partnership: A reflective case study and recommendations for evaluating mentoring in dietetics. Nutrition and Dietetics 70 (4), 339-344.