Designing and Implementing a Mentoring Program Guideline

Section 1 - Purpose and Objectives

(1) The purpose of this Guideline is to provide a common framework, based on best practice principles, to support and inform the design of new, and the continuing development of existing, organised mentoring arrangements at The University of Queensland.

Section 2 - Definitions, Terms, Acronyms

Term	Definition
Organised mentoring	mentoring that occurs within a structured program coordinated by the organisational unit or as part of a professional development program.
Informal mentoring	mentoring that occurs outside an organised mentoring program, initiated by the mentor or mentee.

Section 3 - Guideline Scope/Coverage

(2) This Guideline covers organised mentoring programs. Programs may be designed for particular cohorts of staff, depending on the purpose of the program.

Section 4 - Guideline Statement

(3) Organisational units are responsible for the design, implementation and evaluation of their own programs.

Section 5 - Purpose of Mentoring

(4) Mentoring relationships can vary according to the context and reasons for establishing them. Mentoring is commonly used as a method of transferring specific skills, knowledge and norms to staff as a component in induction, professional development and diversity management programs.

(5) In a staff development framework that emphasises self-managed learning (refer to Staff Development Policy), best practice indicates the need for mentoring that encourages mutual learning within the relationship as well as the desire for development in support of organisational goals.

Section 6 - Principles of Best Practice in Mentoring Arrangements

(6) Coordinators of mentoring programs should follow these principles:

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a. Ensure that information about the program is equally available to all staff in the organisational unit or units covered by the program.
b. Provide a clear statement of objectives for the program based on identified staff and organisational needs.
c. Recruit a program sponsor who can deliver adequate resources and influence internal arrangements and strategies to ensure that the objectives are achievable.
d. Make clear statements on the roles of and expectations for all parties.
e. Encourage voluntary participation by both mentors and mentees. This does not preclude prior identification of potential participants.
f. Base mentor selection on a list of skills and qualities that are consistent with the program's objectives.
g. Give mentees clear instructions on their responsibilities in the relationship and require them to prepare a statement of their development objectives.
h. Provide the opportunity for any participant to request a change in mentoring partner or to withdraw from the program without recrimination.
i. Make adequate training and other support available for all participants, including the coordinator of the mentoring program and the supervisors of mentees where appropriate.
j. Design on-going evaluation into the program prior to implementation.

Section 7 - Implementation

(7) Heads of Organisational Units have responsibility for local program design, implementation and evaluation. There is no prescription as to which model should be selected since this will depend substantially on the local context and purpose for establishing the program.

(8) Small units that wish to provide mentoring support to staff but lack adequate resources could seek to establish a joint or pooling program with another or several other units.

(9) From time to time, central units including Human Resources Division (HR) may offer mentoring programs (or development programs incorporating mentoring) for a particular purpose and target group.

(10) The Organisational Development team in HR is available for consultation on mentoring program design.

(11) It is expected as a normal part of the duties and responsibilities of all staff that those with greater experience freely provide appropriate support and guidance to less experienced colleagues on request and particularly in regard to the institutional knowledge required in order to perform their duties effectively.

Section 8 - Involvement of Heads and Supervisors

(12) Heads of Organisational Units and supervisors have a responsibility to keep themselves informed of staff development needs as well as the availability of appropriate support mechanisms, including organised mentoring arrangements, and to transmit that information to staff. They should participate in any discussion to arrange a mentoring relationship for a staff member reporting to them.

(13) Specific development outcomes from or issues identified within the mentoring relationship can be fed into the performance appraisal process if requested by the mentee and agreed to by the mentor. Supervisors, however, have no direct role in the relationship and will not receive information that is confidential to the relationship.

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