Mentoring Policy

Section 1 - Purpose and Objectives

(1) This Policy provides a standard definition for and a consistent approach to mentoring for academic and professional staff across the University.

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 - Policy Scope/Coverage

(2) This Policy covers both organised mentoring programs and informal mentoring relationships, in which all staff in the University can choose to participate.

(3) Mentoring is separate to performance management and performance appraisal processes.

Section 4 - Policy Statement

(4) The University supports and encourages mentoring. Mentoring is a voluntary, confidential relationship. A mentoring relationship is an effective and efficient staff development method that makes use of the University's wealth of internal capability, benefits both parties involved, and produces a return on the relatively small investment of time and finances involved.

(5) The specific objectives of this Policy are to:

a. emphasise that mentoring is a relationship that is entered into and developed voluntarily and is not a process to be imposed;
b. explicitly recognise mentoring as a valuable and valued element of the staff development framework described in the Staff Development Policy and Staff Development Guideline;
c. ensure that mentoring, particularly in support of individual development and career advancement, is neither confused with nor substituted for supervisory responsibilities arising from the performance appraisal system;
d. establish that mentoring relationships in whatever form are governed by existing policies on quality, equal opportunity, inclusiveness, code of conduct and privacy; and
e. support and encourage the growth of more strategically managed mentoring activities within individual organisational units and across the University as a whole.

(6) There is no intention to impose arrangements in organisational units where there is no requirement or to disturb

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existing arrangements that are functioning well.

Section 5 - Defining Mentoring

The Nature of Mentoring

(7) The University supports a view of mentoring as a private and non-reporting relationship that:

a. disturbs none of the organisational structures in place;
b. enables developments in knowledge, work or thinking;
c. involves a non-directive dialogue rather than instructing;
d. is additional to other forms of staff development and support; and
e. could assist the University's objectives in equal opportunity.

(8) Organised mentoring occurs as part of a structured program, and informal mentoring is independently initiated by a mentor and mentee whenever needed.

(9) Organisational units have responsibility for designing, implementing and evaluating local mentoring programs.

Differentiating Mentoring from Supervising

(10) Heads of Organisational Units and supervisors have responsibility to organise tasks and work processes, define roles and priorities, provide appraisal and a development plan and a research plan (as appropriate), and address performance related issues in order to meet the University's objectives. Additionally they are responsible for developing the staff reporting to them. It is appropriate that this includes engaging in activities such as mentoring, coaching, training and guiding.

(11) Key characteristics distinguishing the role of a mentor from that of a supervisor are that:

a. the mentor has no supervisory responsibility or authority over the mentee;
b. the mentoring relationship provides a confidential, non-judgemental and non-directive environment;
c. the parties to the relationship are equal within and share responsibility for the relationship; and
d. the overall developmental needs of the mentee are the main focus within the relationship.

(12) The role and responsibility of Heads of Organisational Units and supervisors with respect to staff development and performance management is in no way diminished by application of this Policy.

Section 6 - The Role of the Mentor

(13) Mentoring usually involves a more experienced person guiding and sponsoring a less experienced person to achieve goals in an area in which the mentor has experience, which can involve:

a. sharing expertise and experiences;
b. suggesting solutions to problems;
c. acting as a sounding board and providing alternative perspectives;
d. exchanging feedback; and
e. introducing the mentee to people and networks to assist them in their career.

(14) The mentor and mentee share the duty to observe the confidential nature of the relationship and the dialogue

arising within it.

Section 7 - The Role of the Mentee

(15) The role of the mentee can vary depending on the context and purpose of the mentoring relationship but will, in principle, include:

a. taking responsibility for identifying and achieving their own development goals;
b. initiating meetings with the mentor, managing meeting dates and times and negotiating the agenda for discussions within the relationship;
c. listening, clarifying, reflecting back and discussing;
d. sharing expertise and experience; and
e. sharing feedback with the mentor about how the relationship is progressing in order to improve the outcomes they are achieving from mentoring meetings.

Section 8 - The Role of Heads of Organisational Units

(16) It is expected that Heads of Organisational Units will review the mentoring needs of their staff as part of their annual strategic planning process.

(17) Heads of Organisational Units and supervisors are encouraged to specifically recognise the value of mentoring skills by:

a. planning for staff, who act or will act as mentors, to participate in appropriate training and receive adequate support as and when required;
b. taking account of the workload implications when planning the contributions of individuals as mentors or as mentoring program coordinators; and
c. acknowledging significant individual contributions and good practice as a mentor as a component of service in performance reviews.

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