



VICTORIA UNIVERSITY OF
WELLINGTON
TE HERENGA WAKA

ALUMNI MENTORING NETWORK

MENTOR HANDBOOK



**CAPITAL THINKING.
GLOBALLY MINDED.**

MAI I TE IHO KI TE PAE

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HAERE MAI AND WELCOME

Thank you for volunteering as a career mentor for your alumni community. Career mentoring is a very valuable activity, and we hope it will prove to be an enjoyable and constructive experience for you and your mentees.

The Alumni Mentoring Network is a collaborative effort of Te Ratonga Rapu Mahi—Wellington Careers and Employment and the Alumni and Engagement team.

SUPPORT AND CONTACTS

We are here to support you and your mentee so that your mentoring connections and partnership can succeed. If you have any questions or concerns, or would like access to further mentoring resources, contact mentoringnetwork@vuw.ac.nz



WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT AS A MENTOR

As a mentor, you can expect to:

- ▶ be contacted by other alumni looking for advice and insights related to your professional experiences and skills
- ▶ review contact requests from mentees who have viewed your profile (you can accept or decline these requests)
- ▶ make yourself available to mentees whose requests you have accepted to help with career decisions and planning
- ▶ have access to support from university staff to answer questions or address concerns relating to the platform and your mentees.

You will be able to set and adjust your mentoring availability to suit your own changing circumstances. You are not expected to commit to a minimum amount of mentoring over a given period of time.

Note: We cannot reimburse mentoring participants for travel or other costs incurred.



THE MENTEES

Any recent graduate or alum of Te Herenga Waka—Victoria University of Wellington who is seeking career advice from the alumni community can sign up as a mentee. The Alumni Mentoring Network is an interdisciplinary platform with participants from around the world. Depending on your mentee's location, your partnership or one-off meetings may take place online or in person. You can find the mentee's location in their profile.

Mentees may include recent graduates looking for their first role after undergraduate studies, alumni re-entering the workforce after completing postgraduate studies, or alumni experienced in one industry who are considering a career change and seeking advice or insights on their new industry of interest.

Note that Te Ratonga Rapu Mahi—Wellington Careers and Employment services, both online and in person, are available to recent graduates for up to three years after graduation. Some mentees may not realise they can still access these services and may benefit from a reminder from their mentor.

HELP THE RIGHT MENTEES FIND YOU

The answers you provide in the application form are used to generate your mentor profile. If you receive many requests from students whose career goals and needs are not a good fit for you, consider how you might review your answers to capture the attention of mentees whose needs and motivations better align with the help you can provide.

There is a free text field in the application form where you can specify any information you would like to communicate to potential mentees, including any preparation work you would like from a mentee ahead of a meeting or partnership, or details of who might be a suitable mentee for you.



YOUR PROFILE

Mentees discover your profile in one of three ways.

Platform recommendations	▶ Mentee and mentor profiles are assessed for similarity on several variables, such as industry experience or interest and the areas of support offered or sought. If your profile has a high overlap with a student's profile, your profile may be shown as a 'recommended mentor' on the mentee's home page.
Browse and search filters	▶ Mentees can browse all available mentors and use search filters to display mentors who meet the student's search criteria, including area of study, industry experience, current organisation and job title, and languages spoken.
Administrator recommendations	▶ Mentees can also request mentor recommendations from administrators. Usually, an administrator would recommend mentors following a discussion about the mentee's motivations and needs.



MANAGE YOUR AVAILABILITY

Mentees can access the platform and available mentors throughout the year, but you are able to control your visibility in mentor recommendations and mentor listings. If you are temporarily unable to meet or advise mentees, you can change your availability settings on the platform to hide your profile. Once you have more time again, you can readjust your availability.

If you do not engage in the platform for an extended period, you may receive a reminder from the platform to log in or review your profile. The administrators may also contact you about connecting you with mentees looking for help.



TWO CONNECTION TYPES

The Alumni Mentoring Network enables two types of career connections. One-off meetings suit mentors who cannot commit to an ongoing mentoring partnership but who still want to share their career experiences and insights. Mentors who wish to guide others through more complex career questions and exploration can do so through ongoing partnerships.

ONE-OFF MEETINGS

Meeting duration is set to 30 minutes as the default, but the mentee can request longer meetings if required.

Suitable topics for one-off meetings could include, but are not limited to:

- ▶ making and building a new network of contacts in your industry
- ▶ preparing for a job application or an interview in your industry
- ▶ adapting to a new role
- ▶ weighing up job offers.

Help your mentees excel at the meetings by being clear about your expectations ahead of time. If you expect the mentee to provide an agenda in advance, tell them. If you have questions for them, consider sending them ahead of time so that the mentee can prepare for the meeting.

ONGOING PARTNERSHIPS

The platform sets the default duration of ongoing partnerships to three months, but some partnerships will be shorter or longer than this. The mentoring platform provides your mentee with a basic structure to help them stay on track in your partnership, including occasional reminders about meetings and progress reports. However, you and your mentee should negotiate between yourselves what will work best for your partnership.

You should discuss your specific expectations with your mentee at the start of your mentoring partnership. Discuss and agree on:

- ▶ communication (what channels to use and frequency of contact)
- ▶ topics to work on, or goals for the partnership
- ▶ giving and receiving feedback and navigating challenges
- ▶ length of commitment you are willing, and able, to make
- ▶ how to know when to wrap up the partnership (for example, when goals set at the start have been achieved).



MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR PARTNERSHIP

A key skill needed for a mentor in a long-term partnership is to be responsive to your mentee’s needs, goals, and motivations.

Be honest and encouraging but also willing to offer constructive criticism. Share your experiences and offer your opinions but also encourage mentees to form their own ideas. Balance sharing your knowledge and insights with asking a variety of open-ended questions to encourage your mentee to self-reflect.

A good mentor will be responsive to their mentee’s needs and will consider how their mentoring role may change as the needs, or the partnership goals, change. Consider the roles you naturally take on in the mentoring partnership, how they align with the mentee’s immediate needs, whether there is an opportunity for you to develop or hone new mentoring skills through the partnership, and how these new skills might help you in your other professional relationships.

ROLES You might take on as a MENTOR	SOUNDING BOARD	Offering the opportunity to try out new ideas in safety
	LISTENER	Giving the time and space to help your mentee problem-solve
	COACH	Giving encouragement and feedback
	NETWORKER	Helping to develop connections
	ROLE MODEL	Providing examples to learn from
	CONSTRUCTIVE CRITIC	Providing friendly criticism that helps your mentee grow
	INSIDER	Providing organisational or sector knowledge
	CHANGE AGENT	Challenging the status quo
	VISIONARY	Being inspirational

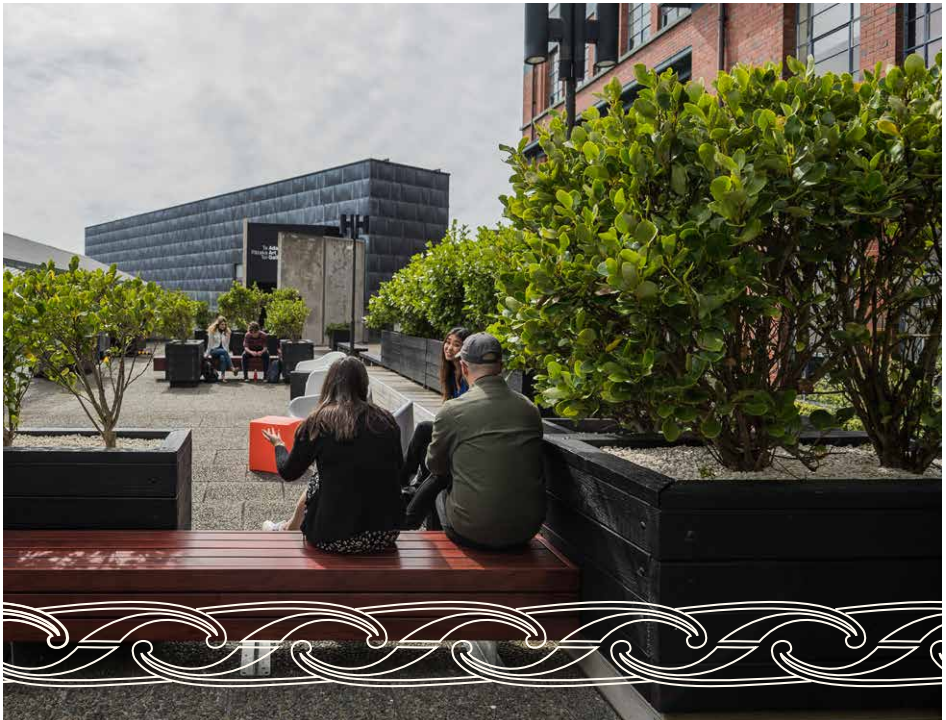


EXPLORE ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

If you want to improve specific mentoring skills or are looking for help with something not covered in this handbook, check out the additional resources available on the platform. These include topics such as:

- ▶ how to use the mentoring platform
- ▶ mentoring skills
- ▶ preparing for mentoring
- ▶ ‘what if’ scenarios and previous partnership stories
- ▶ wellbeing and self-care.

You can also contribute to the discussion forum, share articles you have found helpful, and ask your alumni community for advice.

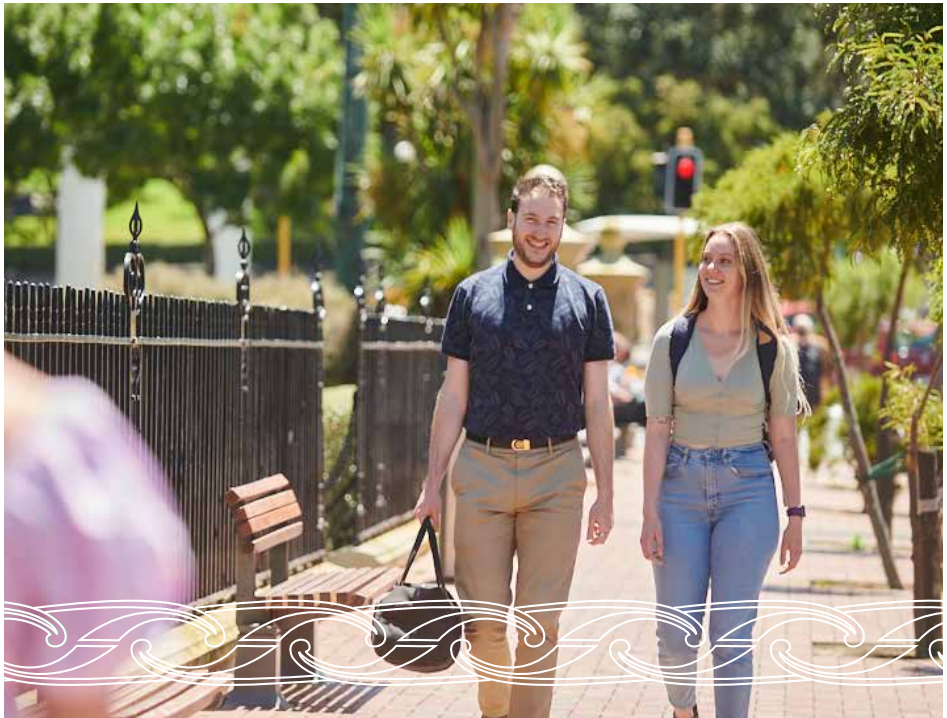


CONNECT WITH YOUR ALUMNI COMMUNITY

The Alumni and Engagement team arranges alumni networking events in New Zealand and in many cities around the world. We encourage you to keep the University updated with your current location and contact email so you can be invited along to events in your area. You can update your details on our [online form](#)

We encourage you to follow the University’s Alumni [Facebook](#) and other [social media channels](#) to stay up to date with what’s happening at the University.

If you want to amend your alumni communication preferences, fill in our [form](#)





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