



VICTORIA UNIVERSITY OF
WELLINGTON
TE HERENGA WAKA

ALUMNI MENTORING NETWORK

MENTEE HANDBOOK



**CAPITAL THINKING.
GLOBALLY MINDED.**

MAI I TE IHO KI TE PAE

CONTENTS

Haere mai and welcome	3
Support and contacts	3
What is expected of you as a mentee	4
The mentors	5
Finding mentors	5
Two connection types	6
Mentee-driven mentoring	7
What makes a good mentee?	8
Your first mentoring meeting	8
Practical tips for success	9
Suggestions for mentoring activities	10
Explore additional resources	11
Connect with your alumni community	11



HAERE MAI AND WELCOME

Welcome to the Alumni Mentoring Network, your platform for connecting with your Te Herenga Waka—Victoria University of Wellington alumni community for career mentoring and growing your professional network.

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 mentor 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 IS EXPECTED OF YOU AS A MENTEE

As a mentee on the platform, you are expected to:

- ▶ review and contact available mentors yourself (if you need help identifying a mentor, the administrators can recommend mentors for you to contact)
- ▶ consider your goals, motivations, and needs *before* contacting a mentor, to make the most of your mentor's limited time
- ▶ respect the decision of any mentors with whom you request to connect (they are allowed to decline mentoring requests)
- ▶ communicate professionally and respectfully with all mentors and mentees on the mentoring platform and the mentoring staff assisting you.

You can also expect support from university staff to answer questions or address concerns relating to the mentoring platform and your mentors.

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



THE MENTORS

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

Mentors can range from young alumni with insights to share about recent experiences in graduate programme recruitment and alumni with a few years of experience in the workforce to alumni with many decades of work experience to share from across industries.

FINDING MENTORS

The answers you provided in the application form are used to recommend suitable mentors. If the mentor recommendations do not align with your needs, review your own profile for consistency with those needs (they may have changed since you first signed up) before reviewing the mentor recommendations again.

TIPS FOR FINDING MENTORS	Platform recommendations
	Browse and search filters
	Administrator recommendations

You can explore all available mentors and use the search filters to narrow the list down to mentors who meet certain criteria, such as areas of study, industry experience, current organisation and job title, and mentoring languages.

You can also request mentor recommendations from the administrators. Usually, an administrator would recommend mentors following a discussion about your motivation and needs.



TWO CONNECTION TYPES

The Alumni Mentoring Network enables two types of career connections. One-off meetings suit mentees who are looking for advice on simpler career questions, such as increasing their awareness of key skills in a particular industry. Mentees who are looking for help and guidance on more complex issues that may take longer to address, such as career planning, career change, and adjusting to working life, can connect with mentors in ongoing partnerships focused on professional growth and development.

ONE-OFF MEETINGS

Meeting duration is set to 30 minutes as the default, but you can request longer meetings if you think this will be 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 in your industry
- ▶ adapting to a new role
- ▶ weighing up job offers.

Make the most of the meeting by preparing ahead of time. Give your mentor an idea of your questions and send relevant information (for example, your application documents and the job description if you are applying for a role). Some mentors may have specific expectations for your preparation, including requesting a meeting agenda.

ONGOING PARTNERSHIPS

The platform sets the default duration of the ongoing partnerships to three months. The mentoring platform provides a basic structure to help you stay on track in your partnership, including occasional reminders about meetings and progress reports. However, you and your mentor should negotiate between yourselves what will work best for your partnership.

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

- ▶ communication (what channels to use and frequency of contact)
- ▶ topics to work on (your goals for the partnership)
- ▶ giving and receiving feedback and navigating challenges together
- ▶ length of commitment you are willing, and able, to make
- ▶ how you will know when to wrap up the partnership.



MENTEE-DRIVEN MENTORING

All mentoring network connections are designed to be mentee driven. This means that you are expected to take the initiative in suggesting areas you want help with or would like to work on. It is not your mentor’s responsibility to set goals for you, but they may instead ask questions to help you reflect on your successes, challenges, needs, and motivation.

If you are uncertain about what you want help with, set aside time to consider your needs before contacting a mentor. Review the resources on the platform tagged with ‘Preparing for mentoring’.

Note that Te Ratonga Rapu Mahi—Wellington Careers and Employment services, both online and in person, are available to graduates for up to three years after graduation. If you are a recent graduate (fewer than three years out of studies), you can book an appointment with a career consultant to discuss how a mentor might be able to help you.

WHAT YOUR MENTOR CAN EXPECT FROM YOU	WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT FROM YOUR MENTOR
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Take the lead in the partnership▶ Contact your mentor and maintain communications regularly▶ Respond in a timely manner▶ Respect and deliver on the arrangements▶ Ensure the focus of the mentoring is careers related	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Share their knowledge, experience, and career advice▶ Help you gain insight into potential career routes▶ Help you develop career skills▶ Provide support with your CV and interviewing skills▶ Offer networking opportunities where possible



WHAT MAKES A GOOD MENTEE?

In mentee-driven partnerships, the mentee is an active and considerate participant in the mentoring partnership. Good mentees take the initiative in seeking guidance and advice and are open and willing to learn from their mentor.

You can show initiative and leadership in the partnership by:

- ▶ initiating and maintaining contact over the duration of your partnership
- ▶ being open about past successes, challenges, strengths, and weaknesses
- ▶ seeking and accepting advice on a range of different topics
- ▶ asking for help or resources.

Overall, your role as a mentee is to identify and work towards achieving your career objectives with guidance from your mentor.

Successful mentoring partnerships are built on the following three underlying principles:

- ▶ **Respect**—mutual respect is the foundation of a successful mentoring relationship. Professional and personal appreciation of one another is crucial to enhancing learning.
- ▶ **Responsiveness**—your willingness to learn from your mentor, and your mentor’s willingness to respond to your learning needs, are important for successful collaboration.
- ▶ **Accountability**—once you and your mentor establish mutually held goals and expectations, keeping to your agreements strengthens trust and helps maintain a positive relationship.

YOUR FIRST MENTORING MEETING

At your first meeting, take the time to get to know your mentor and share a bit about yourself so that you have a good foundation for the work you will do together.

Your mentor wants to HELP YOU so no need to worry	Introduce yourself
	Ask your mentor about their background
	Tell your mentor about what you would like to achieve
	Agree on expectations
	Agree on frequency of contact

PRACTICAL TIPS FOR SUCCESS

Schedule

Schedule regular mentoring meetings

- ▶ Agree on regular meetings at the start of the partnership. Set a date for your next meeting at the end of your current one if you haven't scheduled regular get-togethers. This helps keep you accountable to each other, especially if your lives get busy with other commitments.

Update

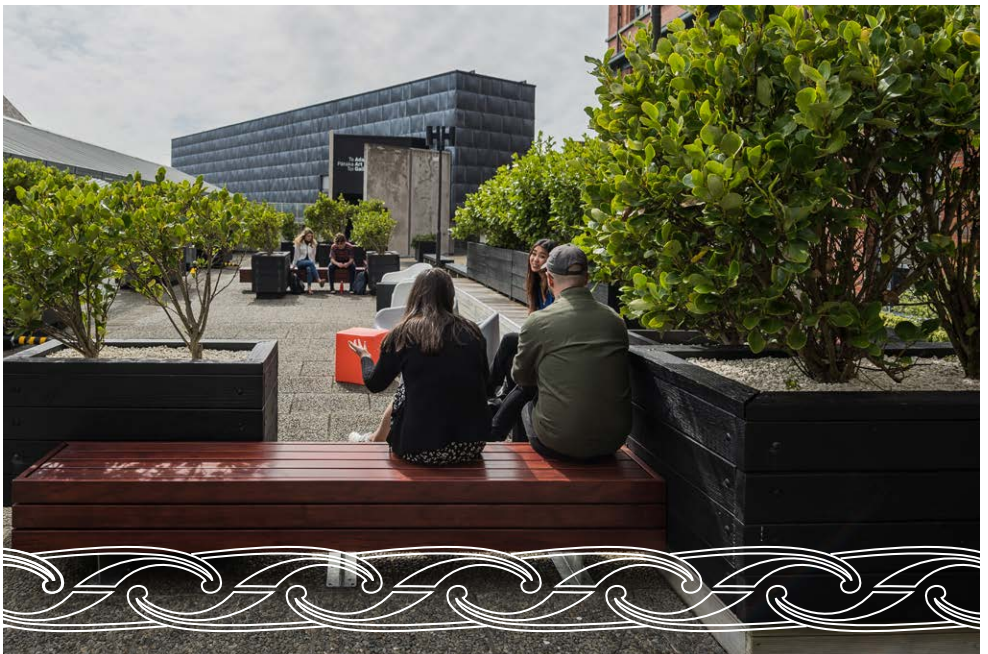
Keep your mentor updated between meetings

- ▶ End each meeting with action points for your next steps. You can add tasks to your Goal Plan on the platform. Track your own progress of the tasks and update your mentor on your progress.

Review

Set aside time to review progress

- ▶ If you agreed on a set of goals at the start of the partnership, dedicate time to review your progress towards these goals. This may also be an opportunity to define new goals if your focus has changed.



SUGGESTIONS FOR MENTORING ACTIVITIES

It is up to you to identify areas you need to work on and to suggest activities that you would like to focus on with your mentor. You set the agenda. The suggestions below are only a few ideas of activities that you and your mentor can do together to develop your employability.

MENTORING ACTIVITY IDEAS

Ask your mentor to review your CV

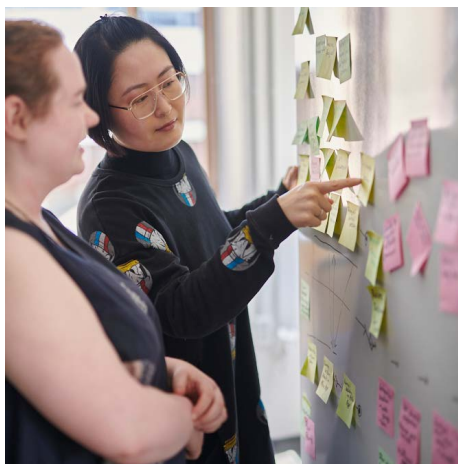
Hold a mock interview

Draft a career plan

Attend an event together

Discuss job openings

Arrange a workplace visit



You can also ask your mentor to share their experiences and career journey with you. Some questions you might like to explore include:

- ▶ What is working life like from their perspective/in their industry?
- ▶ What is the culture of their organisation?
- ▶ What has their career journey been like since graduating?
- ▶ What would they have done differently?
- ▶ What does their organisation look for in candidates?
- ▶ Can they help you identify skills and strengths that you already have?
- ▶ Can they help you identify if you have any skills gaps or weaknesses and ways to improve these?
- ▶ Where should you look for vacancies in your sector of interest?



EXPLORE ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

If you 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
- ▶ 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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